FEBRUARY, 1935

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VALERIAN KUIBYSHEV

On the occasion of the death of Valerian Kuibyshev, member of the Political Bureau of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, Earl Browder, in the name of the Communist Party, U.S.A., addressed the following cable to Joseph Stalin:

"With profound feeling of loss we have learned of the untimely death of Valerian Kuibyshev. We deeply sorrow together with you in this great loss. It is our loss as well. We hope to help make good this loss by more strenuous efforts in our common cause."

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New Developments and New Tasks in the U.S.A.

By EARL BROWDER

NOTE: *This article was originally prepared for publication in November, which accounts for the date of the statistics. The analysis and the forecast have, however, been brought up to date, making the article basic guiding material, along with the Central Committee Resolution printed in this issue, for the carrying out of the main tasks of our Party today.*—EDITORS.

I. THE ECONOMIC SITUATION

THE third year of the depression, following the lowest point of the economic crisis reached in 1932, completely bears out the characterization of the depression as a "depression of a special kind which does not lead to a new boom and flourishing industry, but which, on the other hand, does not force it back to the lowest point of decline".

The short-lived spurt upward of industrial production in the first months of Roosevelt's administration (April-July, 1933), was quickly cancelled by the declines of the last months of the year, while 1934, beginning also with a rise in production, is also ending on the downgrade which more than wipes out all gains in the first part. The zig-zag line representing the high and low points of the depression is indicated in the following figures:

1929 average	100
July, 1932	50
November, 1932	58
March, 1933	51
July, 1933	82
December, 1933	60
July, 1934	72
October, 1934	60

(Based on Federal Reserve Bank index.)

November figures will, probably, bring the index down below the November of 1932, the date on which Roosevelt was elected president two years ago. It would be hard to find signs of recovery in these figures.

The above quoted figures show not only the present difficulties hindering the going out of the economic crisis on the basis of the mobilization of the inner forces of capitalism, but on the whole they reflect the results of the economic policies of the N.R.A. and

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New Deal. These policies have not succeeded in keeping industrial production above the level already reached under Hoover. It is true that Roosevelt's 40 per cent inflation of the dollar created a four-month inflation "boom", but this ended at the same moment that the N.R.A. with its system of industrial codes was established, and almost all those gains from inflation are again wiped out.

A sober estimate from the point of view of finance capital, from the *Business Bulletin* of the Cleveland Trust Company (Nov. 15), is the following:

> "All the advance of the earlier months of this year has been cancelled, and most of the advance of last year."

The financial journal, *The Annalist*, (Oct. 19, 1934), speaking of the September figures, declared editorially:

> "This is the lowest level reached by this index since April 1933. Only in the worst months . . . from April 1932 to April 1933, has this index stood at a lower level. . . ."

And concludes:

> "We are entering the sixth year of depression with business activity almost at its extreme depth."

Employment, wages and earnings have all declined for the working class as a whole, during Roosevelt's regime. Official statistics on employment show an increase, but this is accomplished by spreading part-time work (which is no increase in employment for the working class) and by listing as employed the workers forced to render labor services of non-productive character in return for unemployment relief. Official statistics show an increase in wage scales, but this is in terms of the dollar, which has itself been depreciated 40 per cent, so that real wages have actually declined. Weekly earnings of workers have declined even more than real wages, due to the shortening of working time through the spread-the-work system. Even the organ of finance, *The Annalist*, is forced to admit this (Oct. 26) when it says:

> "Factory employment, seasonally adjusted, was slightly lower than last December, though factory payrolls were slightly higher. If, however, allowance is made for higher living costs, the real wages of factory workers were no higher than last December."

Such conservative sources as Hopkins, national relief director, and William Green, president of the A. F. of L., have publicly admitted that this winter will bring the largest relief lists ever before seen in America. More than 20,000,000 people will be directly

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dependent upon relief, while an additional 20,000,000 will be supported by relatives, friends, and their own last accumulations. A total of 40,000,000, or 30 per cent of the population, will be without normal current income.

II. SIGNIFICANCE OF THE NATIONAL ELECTION RESULTS

Results of the national Congressional elections on November 6, which greatly strengthened Roosevelt's control of Congress, were generally interpreted (both in the U.S. and abroad) as showing a big wave of mass sentiment in support of Roosevelt and the New Deal. This interpretation will not, however, stand up under analysis.

Total votes cast declined under the figure of 1932, by over 10,000,000. This mass abstention from the polls was greater than in normal times, indicating mass dissatisfaction with the programs of the major parties.

This mass abstention was even greater among the followers of the Democratic Party than among those of the Republican Party. While the Republican vote declined by 3,000,000, the Democratic vote declined 7,000,000.

Despite their greater loss of votes, the Democrats increased their strength in Congress. This is because, wherever it appeared that the Republicans had a chance of election, there usually the abstentionism was overcome—the votes turned out *to defeat the Republicans*. That is, large masses were supporting Roosevelt on the theory of "the lesser evil", in spite of their discontent, disillusionment, and even a growing, though vague, mass radicalization.

This mood among the masses was even more sharply and clearly expressed whenever it had the opportunity to rally around candidates, factions or new party formations which appeared before the masses as being "to the Left" of Roosevelt, and which yet did not, in the estimation of the masses, represent a revolutionary departure from the present system. Wherever such "Left" alternatives to Roosevelt were offered, they gained unprecedented mass support. We need mention only four outstanding examples among a great number of lesser ones:

1. Upton Sinclair, with his EPIC program, running on the Democratic ticket, with his promise to "end poverty" without disturbing capitalism, received 800,000 votes out of a total of 2,000,000, and was defeated only by the intervention of the Roosevelt administration against the California Democrats in favor of the Republican candidate.

2. Huey Long retained control of the Louisiana Democratic Party, against the Roosevelt administration, on a program of a two-

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year moratorium on debts, taxation of the circulation of the capitalist daily newspapers, struggle against the bankers, etc., and legalized for the next two years his one-man dictatorship of the state.

3. The LaFollette brothers in Wisconsin, sons of the late leader of the third-party movement of 1924, split away from the Republican Party, established an entirely new party (called "Progressive"), and carried all important state and congressional posts in the elections.

4. Floyd Olson, heading the Farmer-Labor Party of Minnesota, carried the state with an increased majority, on a vague but radical-sounding platform calling for "the cooperative commonwealth".

In these events we have the characteristic feature of the November elections. Without being prepared as yet to come out in support of a revolutionary challenge to the capitalist system, the masses were seeking something new, something more radical, something which promised more definitely relief from their miseries. They rejected decisively all appeals of the Republican Party to return to the era of Hoover, appeals based upon the traditions of the two-party system in America—that discontented masses always vote out the party in power and put its established rival in office again. Where they had no other alternative, they apathetically, without enthusiasm, supported Roosevelt as the "lesser evil". Where a "progressive" faction or party emerged, it at once gained enthusiastic mass support.

We must conclude from the elections that among the broad masses strong currents to the Left have begun. These currents have already paralyzed the normal operation of the old two-party system, begin to present manifestions of its break up, of mass desertion of the old capitalist parties, and indicate the probability that in 1936, with the continued absence of economic recovery, with continued prolonged depression, there will emerge a mass party in opposition to and to the Left of Roosevelt.

III. SOCIALIST AND COMMUNIST PARTIES IN THE ELECTIONS

The Socialist Party vote in the elections was, on the whole, stagnant. In a few localities it succeeded in becoming the "progressive" opposition, and elected state legislators in Pennsylvania and Connecticut. Its national vote will probably fall below that of 1932. (Information on the smaller party votes is not yet completely available.) This stagnant condition was primarily due to its inner condition, which was one of partial paralysis, resulting from a deepening division which has split the party into two main warring camps—one, which wants to take the Party to the Right and merge in the Progressive movement, and the other, which moves to the Left under the general influence of the Communist

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united front activities, and a part of which operates under the slogan of united front with the Communist Party.

The Communist Party vote increased over 1932 by 80 to 100 per cent. The total will be about 225,000. (These figures do not take into account exceptionally large votes for individual candidates, like the 80,000 votes for Anita Whitney in California, but only that cast for the whole or major portion of the Party ticket.) In New York City the vote increased from 26,000 to 45,000; in Ohio, from 8,000 to 14,000; in California from 8,000 to 24,000. In Arizona, the C.P. came second, the comparative vote being: Democratic—45,000; Communist—11,300; Republican—2,500.

In a number of small communities in the mining area of Illinois, the Communist and Socialist workers put up Workers' Tickets on a united front basis; in Taylor Springs, such a ticket was elected to office, including most of the county posts. In Trumbull County, Ohio, a united front between the local Socialist and Communist Parties, which had been formed in a series of struggles, was carried over into the elections, in a joint appeal to the workers to vote for the Socialist local ticket, and for the Communist state ticket (this was facilitated by the fact that the C.P. was not on the local ballot, while the S.P. was absent from the state ballot).

In general, neither the Socialist nor Communist Parties succeeded in engaging in its support the masses who were tending to break away from the two traditional capitalist parties. In the case of the S.P. this is to be attributed primarily to its inner contradictions, to its inability to make up its mind decisively in what direction it wishes to go. In the case of the Communist Party, the subjective weaknesses of insufficient contact with these masses, remnants of sectarian approach, are supplemented by the still low degree of consciousness among the Leftward moving masses, the main part of which is by no means prepared as yet to go boldly upon the path for the revolutionary solution of the crisis, which was given major emphasis by the C.P. during the election campaign.

IV. THE STRIKE MOVEMENT AND THE ROLE OF THE C.P.

The major manifestation of radicalization of the working class was, in 1934, the strike movement, which has already involved well over 2,000,000 workers this year, has taken on political character in the growth of general strike sentiment and actions, and represents the strongest revolutionary upsurge seen in America since the first post-War period.

These strike actions, in their great majority, were carried through under the banner of the American Federation of Labor. This already is a great change from 1931-32, when most strike struggles

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were initiated and led directly by the independent revolutionary unions; and even from 1933, when the strike movement was initiated by the Red unions, which led the first successful strikes in the crisis period, in auto, mining, textile, steel, and other industries, and in which the A. F. of L. only came into the strike movement later, when its membership surged out of its control under the influence of the successful strikes led by the Red unions.

In 1934, the Red unions definitely passed into the background in the basic industries, and to some extent also in light industry. The main mass of workers had definitely chosen to try to organize and fight through the A. F. of L. organizations, even though that meant also struggle against the official top leadership.

The chief feature of the strike wave was the sudden crystallization of a movement for general strike and solidarity strike actions. The first important movement of this sort came in Toledo, Ohio, in May, when a small strike in an auto-equipment factory, on the verge of defeat, was suddenly brought to life again by the surging onto the picket line of ten thousand sympathetic workers, mostly unemployed, who had responded to a call by the Unemployment Councils led by the Communists. The mass picket line, continuing for some days, was attacked by state troops, one worker killed, many wounded, hundreds gassed and arrested. The response to this attack was a vote in every union in the city on the question of an immediate general strike; out of 91 unions, 83 voted for the strike. Before the hour set for the general strike, the employers and union leaders hastily patched up a settlement of the strike, granting the striking workers some of their demands and giving guarantees against victimization.

Within a week or two of the Toledo events, a similar solidarity movement took place in Minneapolis, Minnesota, in support of the teamsters' strike, where also lives were lost, where masses came onto the streets and took possession of them, and where also the general strike was only prevented by a hastily conceived settlement which could be paraded before the workers as a victory.

Again within a few weeks, a strike of street car workers in Milwaukee, Wisconsin, which seemed about to be broken, was suddenly made 100 per cent effective by the surging onto the streets of 40,000 workers, who prevented a single street car from moving. Again the use of violence against the workers, and the killing of a picket, so roused the masses that a general strike vote swept through the unions; within 12 hours the threat of general strike had secured the granting of most of the demands of the original strike and a quick settlement with the union.

During all this period of May, and on into June, the Pacific

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Coast marine workers (longshoremen, sailors, and harbor workers) had been carrying on their general industrial strike over a 2,000-mile stretch of coastline. Early in July, the employers decided to smash the strike by violence, attacking the pickets on the streets of San Francisco, and killing two of them, one a member of our Party. Again the masses responded; at the funeral, 100,000 workers took possession of the main streets of the city. A general strike vote swept through the unions. The Central Labor Union leadership, which had been standing firmly against the general strike, suddenly changed front when they saw the movement going over their heads, came out for the general strike and took the leadership of it, and then proceeded in four days to betray the strike, hoping in crushing the general strike to smash at the same time the marine strike which was under revolutionary leadership.

For four days, however, the City of San Francisco was in the hands of the workers, until the strike committee itself had step by step surrendered the strategic positions and then called off the strike. Only the betrayal of the San Francisco general strike stopped the development of general strikes in Portland, Oregon, and Seattle, Washington.

This wave of local general strike movements and solidarity mass actions is unprecedented in modern American labor history. I will not go into an analysis of these strikes, their strength and weakness, the role of the C.P. in them, etc. This has been done at some length in a special resolution of our Central Committee which has been discussed and approved in the Comintern.

What is important here to establish, is the characteristic of the passing over of even small economic struggles into great political class battles; of the engaging of entire communities in solidarity actions; of the winning of factory strikes by means of the solidarity actions of the unemployed; of the growth of class consciousness and the feeling of class power among the workers, the breaking down of fears and hesitations, the prompt mass responses to go on the streets as the answer to police and military violence.

Within six weeks after the ending of the San Francisco strike, came the great general strike of the textile workers, involving about 400,000 workers. This again was the expression of a great upsurge from below; the strike was forced by the membership against the wish of their leaders; when the strike call was issued, it was met with response far beyond the limits of the organized textile workers, tens of thousands of unorganized workers streaming into the union during the period of strike; entirely new forms of mass action were spontaneously developed from below, outstanding among which were the so-called "flying squadrons", consisting of 50 to 100

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motor cars full of strikers going from town to town to call out on strike the mills still working, and which met with tremendous successes.

Troops were called out in eleven states against the textile strike; the Governor of Rhode Island called upon the Legislature to declare a "state of insurrection" and ask Roosevelt to send Federal troops; the State of Georgia erected concentration camps on the style of Nazi Germany, herding several thousand textile pickets into the camps. Some 18 or 20 workers were killed, hundreds wounded, tens of thousands gassed and arrested.

In spite of this extraordinary terror, the strike was growing stronger every day, extending to new mills, when suddenly it was called off by the leaders on the basis of a request from a Board appointed by Roosevelt, with loud claims of victory but without a single demand conceded by the employers.

It is undoubtedly necessary to characterize this wave of struggle as a revolutionary upsurge of the American working class. This upsurge defeated the efforts of the A. F. of L. bureaucrats and the government to bring the trade unions under governmental control and transform them into semi-official agencies of the N.R.A. It defeated the efforts of the leaders to drive the Communists out of the unions, and opened up a broad field for revolutionary work where before it had been impossible to penetrate. It gave the masses vivid and clear lessons in the practical benefits of class struggle, when the only considerable gains conceded to any group of workers in this period were those given to the longshoremen who had followed Communist leadership throughout their struggle and afterward, and who continued the fight by always new forms even after their strike was ended. As a result of these battles, there is a new relation of forces, a new social atmosphere, a new spirit among the masses, a new confidence and readiness to fight.

In characterizing the strike wave of 1934, it can be said that its most significant features are: first, that for the first time since 1919 have we witnessed such a great wave of struggle, developing on a continually rising level, directed against the effects of the Roosevelt New Deal policies; second, the masses have been aroused to an unparalleled fighting spirit and desire for unity in action, as expressed in the development of solidarity actions and movements for local general strikes, and the participation of the unorganized workers, the unemployed, and even the poor farmers; third, the mass urge of the unorganized workers for organization, and struggle against the company unions, which breaks through all the barriers which the trade union bureaucracy of the A. F. of L. attempt to put up.

The struggles for the most elementary economic demands develop into struggles of highly political character. Every effort of the

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reformist leaders to prevent or sidetrack these struggles did not succeed, and they were forced to go along with the strike movement in order to avoid being swept aside and be in a better position to betray the struggle through arbitration. In this they were ably assisted by the Trotzkyites (Minneapolis), the Musteites (Toledo), and the Socialist leadership (textile).

This strike movement took place mainly through the channels of the reformist unions, and the Communists in the main were unable to exercise a decisive influence in the leadership of the workers because we were not entrenched as yet inside the A. F. of L. unions which the masses were entering for the purpose of carrying on struggles for their daily interests.

Nevertheless, the Communists played a growing and effective role, in some instances relatively weak as in Minneapolis (but even here of decisive importance at certain moments), in other cases of great influence though unorganized, as in the textile strike, and were able to issue timely slogans which were seized upon by the masses and translated into action (mass picketing, general strikes, solidarity actions).

Where the Communists were firmly established inside the A. F. of L. unions and had strong positions, as in the Pacific Coast Longshoremen's strike, we played a leading and decisive role from first to last, and were instrumental in forcing the calling of the San Francisco General Strike.

What is of supreme importance is this, that out of the strike wave the A. F. of L. bureaucracy emerged weaker, the S.P. emerged weaker, the Muste group and the renegades emerged weaker—but the Communist Party emerged stronger in every instance without exception.

V. THE CHANGE IN TRADE UNION POLICY

Serious changes in our current trade union policy were found to be necessary, in order to achieve these positive results in our work. In all the basic industries it was necessary to shift the main emphasis to work inside the A. F. of L. This we proceeded to do, at first with some hesitation, but, with our growing satisfactory experience, with increasing boldness. Among the longshoremen in San Francisco we threw all forces into the A. F. of L. union, with excellent results, not only establishing leadership of the most important strike, but winning victories for the workers, and maintaining our organizational positions after the strike; the big majority of all offices in the union in San Francisco were filled, in the September elections, by Communists and sympathizers.

In the textile industry, we joined the small and scattered locals of

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the National Textile Workers Union into the United Textile Workers of the A. F. of L., thereby multiplying our organizational base by four or five times, and becoming an influential minority in the great strike movement of 400,000.

In the steel industry, we withdrew our Red union, the Steel and Metal Workers Industrial Union, and confined it to the field of light metal and machinery, sending all our steel workers into the A. F. of L. union, the Amalgamated Association of Iron, Steel and Tin Workers, with the result that in a few weeks we have begun to crystallize a great national rank-and-file movement to prepare for strike in the spring, a movement which already has serious organizational strongholds in the union, basic American cadres of leaders, and excellent prospects for a great mass movement.

In the auto industry, we have dissolved the Red Auto Workers Union, sending the members into the A. F. of L. federal local unions, and already have under way a serious movement for the uniting of the 80 to 90 locals in the industry into an industrial union within the A. F. of L., a movement which forced the recent national convention of the A. F. of L. to grant industrial union form of organization to the auto industry, as well as to others.

Even in light industry, we had circumstances where it was necessary to send our forces into the A. F. of L., as in the case of the N.Y. dressmakers, and here again with the excellent results of considerably strengthening our influence over large masses of workers.

The resolution before us today proposes to confirm these changes in our trade union policy, and to set the Party even more firmly and energetically upon this path.

At the same time we do not propose a general and immediate abandonment of all independent revolutionary trade unions. While generally, in all industries, putting forward the line of trade union unity, we recognize that in some cases the cause of unification can be best advanced by strengthening the Red unions, or the independent unions not directly under our leadership.

There are still some seven national unions in the T.U.U.L., as well as a whole series of local unions, with a membership of about 75,000, for whom the perspective for the immediate future is continued independent existence; there are three or four unaffiliated national independent unions of which the same must be said.

That these unions have big possibilities of growth is demonstrated, for example, by the Metal Workers Union, about which news has just come that it has held a unity conference with 12 smaller independent unions, of about 10,000 members, which decided to organize a joint council for common action.

The independent United Shoe Workers Union (in which we

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merged our Red shoe union a year ago) is much larger than the A. F. of L. union, and must talk unity with it in much different terms than in other places where we are relatively weak.

At our Eighth Party Convention, we put forward the perspective of the organization of an Independent Federation of Labor, which would unite the Red trade unions with the then growing independent unions, and with the expected movements of splitting away from the A. F. of L. of those newly-organized workers who rejected the plans of the A. F. of L. to split them up into craft unions. This was a realistic perspective, a possible development, at that time; but now we must say that this project has receded into the background for the next period.

When we are sending a number of our unions into the A. F. of L., when the independent unions are not growing as they did last year, and when the split movements from the A. F. of L. have been halted by the concessions granted at the last convention for industrial unions, it is clear that a new situation has arisen, in which immediate organizational steps for the Independent Federation of Labor would not serve to strengthen the movement. Whether this issue will again come to the foreground will depend upon future developments.

VI. FINDING NEW ORGANIZATIONAL FORMS

In our latest resolution the concepts of "minority movement" and "opposition", as the organizational forms for our work in the A. F. of L., are sharply rejected, as tending to limit the movement to Communists and their close sympathizers; the task is set to find such forms which will lead to the Communists becoming the decisive trade union force, winning elective positions, becoming the responsible leaders of whole trade unions, and bringing the decisive masses behind them in their support. This position is fully confirmed by our experience in recent months.

Our most successful work has, in every case, found organizational forms which arise out of the established life and work of the individual union, in most instances having as its main center one of the union organs, either a local union in which we gain a majority, or a district council or other body of elected delegates.

We have rejected the proposal to attempt to transform into a general "opposition" center the A. F. of L. Rank-and-File Committee for Unemployment Insurance. This body has a specific role to perform, which would only be hindered and perhaps destroyed by trying to make it an all-embracing "minority movement". Its influence extends far beyond its active participants, as shown by the fact that it has won to the support of the Workers' Unemployment and Social Insurance Bill more than 2,400 local unions and

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seven national unions, with a very large part of the members of the A. F. of L. It furnishes a broad recruiting ground for the gathering of new forces into the revolutionary movements in the different industries and unions, which is a much more valuable function than to try itself to become the form for the revolutionary movement in the unions.

An increasingly important role will now be played by revolutionary delegates in trade union conventions and conferences and councils. Even in the A. F. of L. National Convention, which is very tightly controlled by the top bureaucracy, it is possible to develop effective "revolutionary parliamentarism". These possibilities we are now beginning to use; thus, while in 1932, there was not a single revolutionary delegate to the A. F. of L. Convention, and in 1933, there was only one, in 1934 we had 15 delegates standing on our revolutionary program and fighting for its adoption in the Convention, putting forward our various measures before the whole working class through the participation in the Convention.

VII. SOME UNITED FRONT SUCCESSES

An outstanding feature of our united front efforts was the Second U.S. Congress Against War and Fascism, held in Chicago at the end of September. At this Congress were 3,332 delegates, from organizations with a total membership of 1,600,000. That represents an extension of the influence of our movement over about a million organized persons *more* than we have ever before had gathered around us. The quality of this representation was higher than ever before; it came after a year of the most intense attacks against the American League Against War and Fascism by the A. F. of L. and the S.P., who denounced the League and its Congress as a "Communist innocents' club".

In spite of these attacks, the Congress represented considerable expansion in both the A. F. of L. and the S.P. For example, among the 350 trade union delegates was an important delegation of A. F. of L. union leaders, all workers from the mills but influential officials of the union, representing a district which a few weeks later in its convention voted to confirm its affiliation to the League. Further, there were 49 S.P. members present, headed by Mrs. Victor Berger, widow of the former Socialist Congressman, who formed themselves into a national committee to fight for the united front of the S.P. with the C.P.; since the Congress this Committee has gained notable victories. For instance, the Milwaukee S.P. organization, which had threatened to expel Mrs. Victor Berger for attending the Congress, and which actually did expel a member, Compere, has in the past days been forced to reverse itself and officially

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join the League, after participating in a united street demonstration and march, headed by the expelled Compere, together with the secretaries of the local S.P. and C.P., and addressed by Mrs. Berger, among others.

The League Against War and Fascism also made significant advances among women's organizations, in connection with the campaign to send a delegation to the Paris Anti-War Congress of Women. Having set itself the task of getting 15 delegates to Paris, it surprised everyone by obtaining twice that number in a short campaign of 60 days, including that most difficult of all tasks, the raising of sufficient money to cover the heavy expenses of such a long trip for a large delegation.

An autonomous Youth Section of the League held a separate Youth Congress in connection with the main gathering in Chicago, with over 700 delegates. In this Youth Section are included all organizations of youth in the U.S. who in any way consider themselves "to the Left" of Roosevelt.

A unique achievement of the youth united front movement was the building of an anti-fascist bloc inside the American Youth Congress, which was called together by a certain young woman named Viola Ilma with the backing of Mrs. Roosevelt, Anne Morgan, a half-dozen State Governors, members of the Roosevelt Cabinet, etc., with the purpose of adopting a program for American youth which was distinctly fascist in its tendencies.

To this Congress came delegates of all varieties of youth organizations, including Y.M.C.A., Y.W.C.A., Boy Scouts, Girl Scouts, church youth organizations, trade unions, student organizations, the Socialist youth, the Y.C.L., etc., representing a membership of 1,700,000. The anti-fascist bloc in this Congress took control of it at its opening, adopted an anti-fascist program which included the immediate demands of the working youth, consolidated the overwhelming majority of the delegates behind this program, set up a continuation committee to which almost all the participating organizations continued to adhere after the Congress, conducted a series of conferences and meetings over the whole country, captured away from Ilma various state conferences which she tried to organize afterwards, and gathered another Youth Congress in Washington in January, to present the youth demands to Congress and to President Roosevelt.

Our united front approaches to the Socialist Party have been involved in the divisions within that Party which came into the open in the fight for and against the Detroit Convention declaration of principles. Two distinct camps have crystallized, which already have many of the characteristics of two separate parties (separate na-

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tional committees, headquarters, funds, etc.), and which conduct negotiations with one another like two parties.

The so-called "Left", headed by Norman Thomas, is very heterogeneous, and really is a bloc of several distinct groups. The Right Wing is very militant, while the "Left" with Thomas, the Centrist, at its head, is very conciliatory, although it controls the Party. In the Detroit Convention the Right Wing wrote the trade union resolution which was adopted with the vote of the "Left" majority. The Right Wing still dictates or decisively influences many of the current decisions of policy of the National Committee, of which Thomas nominally has a big majority. Thus on the issue of the united front with the C.P., Thomas swings back and forth with the wind of the moment, following no consistent line.

Shortly after Thomas had made a public speech hailing the French united front, and expressing the belief that it could be duplicated in the U.S.A., he participated in the action to reject the united front by the S.P. National Committee. This action was itself a classical study in hesitation and equivocation. On a Saturday the Committee debated the question, coming to a decision *favorable* to opening negotiations with the C.P., by a vote of 7 to 4. A few hours after the meeting closed for the day, a capitalist newspaper appeared on the streets with big headlines announcing "S.P. Decides to Join the Reds". Some of those who had voted for the united front went into a panic at the sight of this capitalist newspaper publicity on their action, and without a full or formal meeting of their committee, decided to reverse their vote, hastily wrote a statement to this effect and gave it to the newspapers, which came out with the news of the *unfavorable* vote two hours after they had announced the *favorable* vote.

The conflict was smoothed over later by a compromise decision, that the question of united front was only *postponed* until December, to obtain the advice of the Second International, to see the further development in France, and to have the results of the Seventh Congress of the C.I. (at that time expected in September); and further, to send a delegation of "observers" to the Chicago Anti-War Congress to report back with recommendations as to whether the S.P. should affiliate or not.

All the conciliation and waverings of Thomas, however, and all his concessions to the Right Wing, have not served to bridge over the split, but seem, on the contrary, only to drive it deeper, to make the struggle develop more sharply. This is because in the lower organizations the controversy is raging, with the adherents of the united front becoming ever stronger, more organized, more clear and effective in their demands. In this the "committee for

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the united front", formed at the Chicago Congress, has been a decisive influence. The Revolutionary Policy Committee, while containing many energetic advocates of the united front, has been singularly passive and irresolute as an organized group. It is too heterogeneous in composition to become a forceful leading center in the inner-Party struggle.

Present indications are that the National Committee of the S.P. will try to obtain a temporary settlement of the conflicts on the united front by a decision to enter into the American League Against War and Fascism, with a series of conditions, such as the addition of a list of leading S.P. members to its leading committees, certain limitations upon criticism by the C.P. against the S.P. leaders and policies, etc. Our policy is to facilitate so far as possible, without concession in principle, the entry of the S.P. into the League; but at the same time to use this to raise even more sharply than before the question of direct negotiations between the two parties for a general united front on all the most burning questions of the class struggle, including the fight for the Workers' Unemployment and Social Insurance Bill, the Negro Rights Bill, Farmers' Relief, and the current strike movements.

VIII. THE QUESTION OF A LABOR PARTY

The political changes taking place among the American masses already require that the Communist Party shall again review the question of the possible formation of a Labor Party, and its attitude toward such a party if it should crystallize on a mass scale. The correct basic approach to this question was formulated at the Sixth World Congress in 1928, which said:

> "On the question of organizing a Labor Party, the Congress resolves: that the Party concentrate on the work in the trade unions, on organizing the unorganized, etc., and in this way lay the basis for the practical realization of the slogan of a broad Labor Party, organized from below."

Since 1929 until now, this correct orientation has necessitated unqualified opposition by the Communist Party to the current proposals to organize a Labor Party which, in this period, could only have been an appendage of the existing bourgeois parties.

Developments in 1934, however, begin to place this question in a new setting, in a new relation of forces.

The decisive new features are, in brief:

1. Mass disillusionment with the New Deal and Roosevelt administration, shown by the development of the strike wave *against* the codes, and *against* the Government conciliation and arbitration boards,

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also shown negatively in the fall of the Democratic Party vote from 22,000,000 in 1932 to 15,000,000 in 1934.

2. The bankruptcy of the Republican Party policy, which attempted to utilize this disillusionment and turn it into openly reactionary channels, according to the traditional two-party system, but without success.

3. The mass support given in the election to groupings and leaders within the old parties and to new and minor parties standing (in the eyes of the masses) to the Left of Roosevelt (Sinclair in California; LaFollette and the new Progressive Party which captured the State of Wisconsin; Olson and the Farmer-Labor Party who won Minnesota with an unexpectedly large vote; Huey Long faction of the Democratic Party in Louisiana, with its two-year moratorium on debts, etc.; and a number of less significant examples all over the country).

4. Renewed mass interest in the trade unions in all forms of proposals that the workers' organizations engage directly in political struggle against the capitalists and their parties, whether through a Labor Party, through workers' tickets, or in other foms.

It is clear that mass disintegration of the traditional party system has begun; masses are beginning to break away from the Democratic and Republican Parties. There are all probabilities that the discontented, disillusioned masses will already be moving during the next two years sufficiently to give birth to a new mass party, to the Left of and in opposition to the existing major political alignments.

As to the character of such a new mass party, the major possible variants are the following: (a) A "Peoples" or "Progressive" Party, based on the LaFollette, Sinclair, Olson, Long movements, and typified by these leaders and their program; (b) A "Farmer-Labor" or "Labor" Party, with the same character, differing only in name and extent of demagogy; (c) A Labor Party with a predominantly trade union base, with a program of immediate demands only (possibly with vague demagogy about a "cooperative commonwealth" a la Olsen), dominated by a section of the trade union bureaucracy assisted by the Socialist Party and excluding the Communists; (d) A Labor Party built up from below, on a trade union basis but in conflict with the bureaucracy, with a program of demands closely associated with mass struggles, strikes, etc., with a decisive role in the leadership played by militant elements, including the Communists.

The major task of the Communist Party is to build and strengthen its own direct influence and membership, on the basis of the immediate issues of the class struggle connected with its revolutionary program for a way out of the crisis. It cannot expect, how-

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ever, that it will be able to bring directly under its own banner, and immediately, the million masses who will be breaking away from the old parties.

At the same time, it cannot remain indifferent or passive towards the development of these millions, nor the organized form which their political activities will take. It must energetically intervene in this process, influence the development towards assuming the form of a real Labor Party based upon the working masses, their struggles and needs, ally itself with all elements willing to work loyally towards a similar aim, and declare its readiness to enter such a mass Labor Party when the necessary preconditions have been created.

At the same time, it must conduct a systematic struggle against all attempts to capture this mass movement within the confines of a "Peoples" or "Progressive" Party, or within a Party of the same character masquerading as a "Labor" Party. This will at the same time be the most effective basis for struggle against a Labor Party bureaucratically controlled from above by Right Wing reformists with the exclusion of the Communists and rank-and-file militants.

In this situation the simple slogan "For a Labor Party" is not an effective banner under which to rally the class forces of the workers. This will be also the main slogan of a section of the reformist bureaucrats, who will transform its contents into that of a mild liberal opposition; its undifferentiated use by the Communists would therefore play into their hands. Every effort must be made, therefore, to bring a clear differentiation into two camps of those who are trying to turn the mass movement into two different channels, on the one hand of mild liberal opposition masking class collaboration and a subordination of the workers' demands to the interests of capital, of profits and private property, and on the other hand of an essentially revolutionary mass struggle for immediate demands which boldly goes beyond the limits of the interests of capital. In this struggle for differentiation, care must be taken to avoid all sectarian narrowness, which would only play into the hands of the reformists; that means, first of all, that the basis of unity of the working class camp must be the immediate demands with the broadest mass appeal. At the same time the Communist Party energetically conducts its own independent political mass work for the revolutionary way out of the crisis.

All premature organizational moves should be carefully avoided. The Communist Party should not itself and alone initiate the formation of a new Party. In the various states this problem will present itself with all variations of the possible relation of forces. It will be necessary to study carefully the situation in each state, and the tempo of development, adjusting our practical attitude and tactics

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in accordance with these differences. There is much greater possibility of the final crystallization of a mass Labor Party in certain states, in the immediate future, than upon a national scale where the contradictions and complications are more intense.

It is necessary to strengthen systematically all mass connections of the Party, and the Party itself, politically and organizationally, preparing to face and to solve without undue hesitation the various practical phases of this question that will present themselves in life, and which will be especially subtle and intricate in the earlier stages of development. The basic means to this end is the bold and energetic expansion of our united front work in all fields, but before all in the trade unions, especially in the A. F. of L.

Every phase of the struggle for the political leadership of the masses now breaking away from the Democratic and Republican Parties is dependent upon the constant growth and strengthening of the Communist Party as an independent revolutionary force, with its full program made familiar to ever broader masses. It depends upon, and must always be subordinated to, the daily mass struggles of the workers, before all, of strikes and other economic struggles, the struggles of the unemployed, of the farmers, the movement for Unemployment Insurance, etc.

Under the conditions of the crisis, in its present phase of protracted depression, with sharpening and broadening mass struggles, of growing difficulties of the bourgeoisie, the only forces capable of leading a mass struggle really to win the immediate demands of the toiling masses of the United States, is the revolutionary vanguard of the working class under the leadership of the Communist Party.

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On the Main Immediate Tasks of the C.P.U.S.A.

(Resolution adopted by the Central Committee Plenum, January 15-18, 1935.)

PROFOUND changes have taken place in the U.S.A. in the recent period. The transition of the crisis into a depression of a special kind, lasting already two years, did not bring prospects of an upsurge in the economy of the country. Instability and lack of assurance in the morrow remain the dominating features of the entire economic life in the U.S.A. The New Deal policy and the N.R.A. in the conditions of depression helped American capitalism to pass through the difficult period of 1933. But, at the same time, it aided to a certain extent to let loose those economic and political tendencies of capitalism which are growing out of the entire development of the crisis and the depression and the intensification of the general crisis of capitalism (the acceleration of the concentration of capital in the hands of monopolist corporations which are conducting a still harsher policy towards the masses, the strengthening of fascist tendencies, etc.).

At the same time, there is a Leftward swing of the working class and an upsurge of a mass strike movement—with the still weak development of the class consciousness and organization of the masses, —the growth of the workers' organizations, especially the A. F. of L. unions, the strengthening of the desire of the masses for the united front and for a big consolidation of their ranks, the growth of sentiments in favor of a mass Labor Party, with the simultaneous increase in the activity of the bourgeois and petty-bourgeois elements towards the formation of a third bourgeois party and increased activity of social reformism.

The influence of the C.P. grew, its work has improved, the Party organizations have been strengthened, but the Party did not yet overcome serious shortcomings in the trade union work, in its participation in the strike movement, in the work of the lower Party organizations among the broad masses of workers and toilers.

All this in its entirety very strongly emphasizes the necessity of organizationally and politically strengthening the Party in every possible way, of overcoming the weaknesses of its work, of recruiting new workers into its ranks, overcoming the excessive fluctuation, of increasing and improving the Party press, of developing a wide

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propaganda of the tactics and program of the Party, of strengthening of its independent leading role in all the struggles of the working class and all the toilers of the U.S.A.

With these aims in view, the Party must verify its work and lay down its tasks on three most important questions—the trade union question, the united front, and the question of the possible formation of a mass Labor Party.

I. THE TRADE UNION QUESTION

The influx of hundreds of thousands of new workers from basic industries and mass production plants into the A. F. of L. unions, and the growing radicalization of the main mass of its membership, make the A. F. of L. unions more militant and mass unions in character, opening up new and greater possibilities of revolutionary mass work within them.

1. In view of this, the main task of the Party in the sphere of trade union work should be the work in the A. F. of L. unions so as energetically and tirelessly to mobilize the masses of their members and the trade unions as a whole for the defense of the every day interests of the workers, the leadership of strikes, carrying out the policy of the class struggle in the trade unions. It is necessary for the Party, overcoming the resistance of the trade union bureaucracy and sectarian remnants in the ranks of the Party and adherents of the revolutionary trade union movement, to achieve, by all means, real work in the unions of the A. F. of L. The Communists and other advanced workers must develop a wide strike movement, fighting on the basis of trade union democracy for the leadership of the struggle, in spite of the sabotage and the treachery of the trade union bureaucrats, for the demands of the workers, for the recognition of the trade unions, against wage cuts and for higher wages, especially in view of the rise of prices, for the reduction of the working day without a reduction in earnings, for social insurance, unemployment relief, etc.

2. The Party must take the initiative in the struggle for the unity of the trade unions, for their industrial structure, the organization of the unorganized and amalgamation on the basis of trade union democracy, the autonomy of individual trade unions in their internal affairs within the framework of general affiliation to the A. F. of L., simultaneously struggling to destroy the policy of company unionism.

3. The Party fractions must win the revolutionary unions for a struggle for trade union unity by methods which correspond to the concrete conditions in each industry. The existing revolutionary trade unions and their locals join the A. F. of L. or its unions wherever there exist parallel mass A. F. of L. trade unions, or the Red

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trade unions can join the A. F. of L. directly. The form of such fusion depends upon the relationship of forces between the revolutionary trade union and the A. F. of L. union.

However, in all conditions, the revolutionary unions and their branches, collectively deciding their action, should attempt to join the A. F. of L. unions as organized units, not weakening their mass work, but, on the contrary, utilizing their entrance into the A. F. of L. as a means of more widely mobilizing the working masses around the revolutionary leadership, organizing and distributing their forces so as to have the possibility of exercising a maximum amount of influence on the work of the A. F. of L. unions. In those cases when collective joining is not possible, members of the Red unions should join the unions of the A. F. of L. individually.

When adopting a decision for any particular Red trade union to enter the A. F. of L., or for a Red trade union to fuse with some A. F. of L. union, it is necessary to carry on advance serious explanatory work among the trade union masses, so that members of the Red trade union will understand the necessity for such a political step, so that after fusion there will be an increase in the revolutionary activity of the members of the Red trade union in the A. F. of L. union.

4. Only those revolutionary unions, whose entrance into the A. F. of L. at the present time is impossible in practice, will temporarily continue to exist independently, extending their mass basis, energetically recruiting new workers. At the same time, they should carry out the united front with the A. F. of L. unions and the independent unions, struggling consistently for trade union unity and their entrance into the A. F. of L., and helping in the general strengthening of the position of the revolutionary trade union movement.

When raising as the chief task the work in the trade unions of the A. F. of L., at the same time Communists must not to any extent weaken the work in the independent unions, as was pointed out in previous decisions. However, in view of the changing conditions of trade union work, which demand that the center of the work be transferred to the A. F. of L., it is now inadvisable to put the question of forming an Independent Federation of Labor. Inside independent trade unions, Communists, taking into consideration specific conditions, in each case, should carry out the same tactic of struggle for trade union unity and affiliation to the A. F. of L.

5. The tone used in the press with regard to the A. F. of L. must be changed, criticizing and exposing the reactionary leaders of the A. F. of L. in a manner convincing for the rank and file, but treating the A. F. of L. locals and unions as mass workers' organizations in which we are carrying on a struggle for winning the masses

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to the revolutionary struggle, drawing in all honest functionaries, fighting for our influence, for winning the trade union posts, and being ready to take on ourselves responsibility for their work.

6. It is necessary to give the maximum amount of attention to the correct organization of the work of the fractions in the trade unions, taking into account that, in connection with the transfer of the chief attention to work in the A. F. of L., the work of the Communist fraction becomes of decisive importance for ensuring the correct work of all the Communists in the trade union movement and in carrying out the Party line. Without strong and well organized fractions, the Communist Party cannot carry out the necessary flexible tactic and carry out its revolutionary line. Carrying out decisions through fractions, the Party organizations must act through convincing the members of the Party who work in the trade unions, by means of help and example, thus forming and strengthening internal discipline. Everyday leadership on the chief questions of the work of our fractions in the trade unions, especially in respect to strike leadership, must be concentrated directly in the C.C. at the Center and in the appropriate Party committees in the localities.

For a correct approach to the work in the A. F. of L., it is necessary from the very outset to come out against the limitation of the tasks of this work to the creation of a "Minority Movement", or "Opposition" being limited to the most militant elements that are close to the Communists, and not striving to become a real trade union force winning the trade unions, their locals, various elected posts in the trade union organs, etc. In order to be a leading force for all the discontented workers who are swinging to the Left, in order to be a mass force, the Communists, fighting for the interests of the workers, strengthening their class positions in the A. F. of L., and in all the trade unions, increasing the offensive on the bureaucracy, must work like real trade unionists, looking after the affairs of their union, seeing to its strengthening and widening, fighting for every elective post in the trade unions, for whole trade union organs in the trade unions and whole unions, actively participating in the training of new cadres of revolutionary trade unionists.

In energetically carrying out this reorganization of the work of the Party in the trade unions, which has partially already been started, it is necessary carefully to explain inside the Party the tasks of the reorganization of trade union work, avoiding taking steps without preparation, which can only hinder matters.

II. THE UNITED FRONT

The movement for the united front is expressed in the growth of the influence of the C.P. among the workers, in the strivings of

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the workers to carry out joint activity, overcoming craft and other barriers (the movement for general strikes), in the rebuff to Green's letter on the expulsion of Communists by the A. F. of L. locals, in the attraction of the local organizations of the Socialist Party into the united front movement, in the wide movement of the united front against fascism and war. While overcoming its shortcomings in conducting the tactics of the united front, a sectarian and formal approach to the question of a united front and also opportunist mistakes, the Party must insistently continue the campaign for the united front, placing the struggle for the united front at the basis of all its mass policy.

1. First of all, the Party must explain in its own ranks the significance of the united front in the condition of the U.S.A. The efforts of the Socialist Party to base itself on the trade unions and on the movement for a Labor Party show that social-reformism is trying to create a broad mass proletarian basis for itself, fusing itself even more completely with the leaders of the reformist trade unions of the A. F. of L. Therefore, a most important peculiarity of the struggle against social-reformism and the problem of the united front in the U.S.A. is the fact that the development of the united font now rests primarily on the capable and energetic work of the Communists in the A. F. of L. unions. This should be done on the grounds of the defense of the general class interests and immediate needs of the working masses, on the winning of positions in the A. F. of L. unions by the Communists, in order to win the confidence of the membership of the A. F. of L. by exemplary participation in the current work of the union, as well as in the strike movement, so that the masses of A. F. of L. members support the policy of the class struggle and look upon the C.P. as their own Party.

2. A most important condition for the successful and correct carrying out of the united front in face of the fact that the idea of an independent proletarian party is very poorly developed among the workers, is the explanation of the role of the Party, its tactics and principles. But it is necessary to have in mind that the working masses will only understand the leading role of the Party and accept the Party leadership when they see by experience that the Party is leading them to successes in the struggle against capital.

3. A very serious obstacle on the path of the organization of a wide fighting united front of the working class by the Party consists of the still strong sectarian features in the work of the Party. This sectarianism cannot be eliminated merely by an ideological campaign nor by the correcting of various isolated mistakes in the press or in practical work. In order to eliminate sectarianism, to come out onto the broad political arena, putting before the masses all the questions of the American labor movement, win influence in the big mass

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organizations of the American proletariat, and draw into the Party the basic strata of the American workers, the Party should earnestly and energetically, from top to bottom, carry into life the tasks put by this resolution, and representing concrete proposals to aid the Party to realize the turn to mass work and to overcome the remnants of sectarianism.

4. An immediate practical task of the Party is the further development of the united front with the local organizations of the S.P., continuing to make united front proposals to the national leaders. The Party press and the Party agitators must bring forward more convincing arguments in the polemic against the policy and leaders of the S.P., avoiding the replacement of arguments by abuse. This requires an increase of a convincing struggle of principles against social-reformism in the press, strengthening the agitation and propaganda, while maintaining a comradely attitude to the reformist workers, with the most patient analysis of their arguments and mistakes.

In the approach to the various groupings in the S.P., the Party must direct particularly strong and intensive fire against the Right Wing of the Socialist Party, exposing its cynically conciliatory policy towards the bourgeoisie and the A. F. of L. bureaucrats, appealing to the indignation of the proletarian rank and file of the S.P. against the leaders.

At the same time, an extremely intensive struggle must be carried on against the middle trend represented by Thomas, the ideological leader of the S.P., pointing out its capitulation to the Right Wing, its practical incapability of carrying on a policy differing in essence from the Right Wing, strengthening the position of the Right Wing in the Party.

In respect to the Left tendency, we should carry on more explanatory work in relation to the proletarian elements, pointing out their mistakes, inconsistency and half-heartedness, both of principles and in respect to the double nature of their position in the Party—on the one hand Left declarations, and on the other hand, the Right policy of the Party as a whole, for which the Left tendency bears responsibility and, in essence, carries it out in practice, at any rate, in some cases. In relation to the leading elements of the Left current, it is necessary to carry such a policy that the working masses, on the basis of their relations to the important current questions of the class struggle, will be able to see the insincerity of those who only play at being Left in order to deceive the masses, at the same time, drawing more closely into joint work all sincere functionaries.

The Party organizations must get into contact with the Left groups, especially in important states like Illinois, Michigan, Wisconsin, where a large majority of the votes at the referendum were

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cast for the Detroit Declaration. Every possible encouragement should be given to the group which supports the united front, as well as to all sincere supporters of the united front. In respect to the Declaration itself, while recognizing it as a step to the Left in comparison with the former position of the S.P. and the position of the Rights, it is necessary to point out both its shortcomings and the fact that, on the whole, it is a compromise reformist platform.

The successful operation of the united front is only possible if the position of the Party on this question, and the experience of conducting the united front, is systematically explained in the Party press.

III. THE LABOR PARTY

The political changes which have taken place among the masses demand that the C.P. should review its attitude towards the reviving mass sentiments in favor of a Labor Party and in respect to such a Party if it should be formed on a mass scale. The correct approach to this question was formulated, on the whole, by the Sixth World Congress in 1928, in the following form:

> "On the question of the organizing of a Labor Party, the Congress resolves: That the Party concentrate its attention on the work in the trade unions, on organizing the unorganized, etc., and in this way lay the basis for the practical realization of the slogan of a broad Labor Party organized from below."

Since 1929, until now, this correct orientation has necessitated unqualified opposition by the Party to the current proposals to organize a Labor Party which, in this period, could only have been an appendage to the existing bourgeois parties. However, the events in 1934 are beginning to place this question in a new light. The mass disintegration of the traditional party system has begun, and a new mass party may come forward in the near future.

As for the nature of the new mass party, the greatest probabilities reflecting the two chief political tendencies of this movement—the class struggle or class collaboration—are: (a) a "Popular" or "progressive" party based on the LaFollette, Sinclair, Olson and Long movements, and typified by these leaders and their programs; (b) a "Farmer-Labor" or "Labor" Party of the same character, differing only in name and the degree of its demagogy; (c) a "Labor Party" with a predominantly trade union basis, with a program consisting of immediate demands (possibly with vague demagogy about the "cooperative commonwealth", a la Olson), dominated by a section of the trade union bureaucracy, assisted by the Socialist

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Party and excluding the Communists; (d) a Labor Party built up from below on a trade union basis but in conflict with the bureaucracy, putting forward a program of demands closely connected with mass struggles, strikes, etc., with the leading role played by the militant elements, including the Communists. These variations can develop also parallel or in combination.

The major task of the C.P. is to build and strengthen its own direct influence, to increase the number of its members, and in every way to strengthen the authority of the Party among the masses, to struggle for its principles and tactics. For the very reason that life itself raises the question of the Labor Party, we must strengthen our Party as the only real independent proletarian Party which cannot be replaced by any other organization in the struggle of the working class for its liberation. The Party cannot expect, however, that it will be able to bring directly and immediately under its own banner the millions who are breaking away from the old parties. At the same time, it cannot remain indifferent or passive to the further development of these millions nor towards the organized form which their political activity will take.

1. In these changed conditions, the C.P. must change its negative position towards the Labor Party question. It should declare its support for the movement for a Labor Party and fight in this movement for the policy of the class struggle, resisting all attempts to bring the movement under the control of social-reformism. It must ally itself with all elements that are ready to work loyally toward a similar aim. The C.P. must carry on a systematic struggle against all attempts to direct this movement along the channel of a "popular" or "progressive" party or along the lines of a Party of the same character, masquerading as a "Labor" Party. This is also a practical basis for the struggle against bureaucratic control of the mass movement from above by the Right reformists who want to expel the Communists and the revolutionary rank-and-file members of the organization.

Therefore, every effort must be made to bring a clear differentiation of these two camps which are trying to direct the mass movement into various channels—on the one hand, that of a moderate, liberal and social-reformist opposition masking class collaboration and the subordination of the workers to the interests of capital, of profits and private property, and, on the other hand, that of an essentially revolutionary mass struggle for immediate demands which go beyond the limits of the interests of capital. In this struggle for differentiation, care must be taken to avoid all sectarian narrowness, which would only play into the hands of the reformists. This means, first of all, that the basis of gathering together of the working class must be the immediate demands with the broadest mass appeal, not allow-

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ing the reformist leaders to split the masses by speculating on the fact that a part of the workers accept the program of the class struggle up to and including the dictatorship of the proletariat, while another part supports the policy of class struggle only for the partial demands of the workers, but are not yet ready to go further on this path.

2. In this situation, the simple slogan "for a Labor Party", which expresses such conflicting tendencies, of itself is not sufficient to be an effective banner under which the class forces of the workers can be rallied. The Communists enter the movement for the Labor Party only with the purpose of helping the masses to break away from the bourgeois and social-reformist parties and to find the path to the revolutionary class struggle.

All premature organizational moves should be carefully avoided. The C.P. must not now take the initiative in the organization of a Labor Party on a national scale. But in the various states this problem will present itself in various ways according to the relationship of forces. It will be necessary to study the situation carefully in each case and the tempo of development, adjusting our practical position and tactics in accordance with these differences. In those states and localities where the conditions have matured for the formation of a mass Labor Party, the Party then should itself, or through people and organizations close to the C.P., take the initiative in giving organizational form to this movement. The Party should take into consideration that the movement for a Labor Party will only then serve as a weapon for the unfolding of the class struggle of the proletariat and facilitate its liberation from the influence of reformism, when, from the very outset, our Party will play an active role and show initiative, and by working energetically in the A. F. of L., will win important positions and will achieve successes in the organization of the united front with Socialist and reformist workers. It is also in this manner that our Party will be in a position to exercise seriously its revolutionary influence on the broad masses, participating in the movement for a Labor Party and winning them for a real revolutionary policy.

The struggle for the political leadership of the masses who are now breaking away from the Democratic and Republican Parties depends at all its stages on the constant growth and strengthening of the C.P. as an independent revolutionary force for which purpose it is necessary to popularize the Party program to ever broader masses. The chief means to this aim is the bold and energetic development of our work for the united front in all spheres, but above all, in the trade unions, especially those affiliated to the A. F. of L.

The results of the elections showed that Roosevelt's influence upon the masses, while weakened and even shaken to some extent,

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still remains predominant. The C.P. has insufficiently utilized the opportunities to politically enlighten the masses who are disillusioned in the "New Deal". Bourgeois reformists of the type of Sinclair, the Progressives with LaFollette, the Farmer-Labor Party with Olson, etc., were able to draw in their wake the great majority of those who broke with Roosevelt and the Republicans. This brings forward the necessity of improving and strengthening the political agitation of the Party and more convincingly and firmly exposing Roosevelt's policies, his bourgeois fellow-travellers and opponents from the Left. While conducting an intense campaign against the extreme Right fascist and semi-fascist representatives of finance capital, the Republican Party, the American Liberty League, etc., it is necessary to show the class kinship of Roosevelt's policy with the policy of his opponents from the Right, explaining to the masses that Roosevelt with the New Deal and N.R.A. policy does not embarrass or hinder the carrying out of the policy of finance capital, of Wall Street, but, on the contrary, resorting to more skillful methods, rather makes easier the carrying out of this policy. Only the class struggle against the entire policy of the bourgeoisie can defend the interests of the masses and crush the plans of finance capital and fascism.

In order to strengthen the work of the Party, it is necessary to further improve the *Daily Worker*, which has achieved a number of successes. The political agitation in the paper, and the propaganda of the tactics and principles of the Party, must be improved, strengthening by every means the struggle against social-reformism. At the present stage of development, the Party and the paper must most urgently be given more of a mass character, both as to contents and form, so as to make it reach hundreds of thousands of readers.

The Party must further develop its publishing activity, improving its propagandist work, and greatly increasing the issue of propagandist literature.

Work must be intensified on the training of cadres for the Party. The system of instructors, which has justified itself in practice as an effective form of closer contacts and help for the lower Party organizations by the leading bodies, must be extended and improved on the basis of the use of experience. Simultaneously, the initiative of the lower Party organizations must be developed in every way, giving them leadership more on the basis of conviction, examples and assistance.

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The Socialist Revolution in the United States

By ALEX BITTELMAN

(Chapter from a forthcoming work.)

IS THE Socialist revolution in the U.S.A. inevitable? Is it possible? Can it be victorious? The reformists, the social-reformists, answer these questions in the negative—it is not inevitable, it is not possible, it cannot win. The bureaucracy of the A. F. of L., and the elements in the labor movement that are related to it, go even further: they maintain that the Socialist revolution is not desirable in the U.S.A., even if it were possible. Social-reformism thus takes its position on the side of dying capitalism and against the maturing Socialist revolution in this country. The Communist Party, on the other hand, answers these questions in the affirmative. It sees its historic task in organizing and leading the American working class and its allies to the victory of the Socialist revolution—the establishment of the dictatorship of the proletariat and the building of Socialism in the U.S.A.

The C.P.U.S.A. proceeds from the Marxist-Leninist theory of the proletarian revolution. This theory rests on the following well-known Marxian proposition:

> "In the social production which men carry on, they enter into definite relations which are indispensable and independent of their will; these relations of production correspond to a definite stage of development of their material powers of production. The sum total of these relations of production constitutes the economic structure of society—the real foundation, on which rise legal and political forms of social consciousness.
>
> "The mode of production in material life determines the general character of the social, political, and spiritual processes of life. It is not the consciousness of men that determines their existence, but, on the contrary, their social existence determines their consciousness.
>
> "*At the certain stage in their development, the material forces of production in society come into conflict with the existing relations of production, or—what is but a legal expression for the same thing—with the property relations within which they had been at work before. From forms of development of the forces of production, these turn into their fetters. Then comes the period of social revolution.*" (Introduction to *Critique of Political Economy*—our emphasis—A.B.)

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This contradiction between the productive forces and the production relations finds its conscious expression in the class struggle, especially in the struggle between the two main classes in capitalist society, the bourgeoisie and the proletariat. Capitalist development creates, not only the material conditions for a higher form of society, Socialism; it also creates a class capable of and interested in solving this contradiction by overthrowing the rule of the bourgeoisie and establishing the rule of the proletariat. Says the *Communist Manifesto*:

> "The essential condition for the existence, and for the sway of the bourgeois class, is the formation and augmentation of capital; the condition for capital is wage-labor. Wage-labor rests exclusively on competition between the laborers. The advance of industry, whose involuntary promoter is the bourgeoisie, replaces the isolation of the laborers, due to competition, by their involuntary combination, due to association. The development of Modern Industry, therefore, cuts from under its feet the very foundation on which the bourgeoisie produces and appropriates products. What the bourgeoisie therefore produces, above all, are its own grave-diggers. Its fall and the victory of the proletariat are equally inevitable."

We have discussed elsewhere the chief contradictions of capitalism. These contradictions find their solution only in the proletarian revolution. And in the following way:

> "The proletariat seizes the public power, and by means of this transforms the socialized means of production, slipping from the hands of the bourgeoisie, into public property. By this act the proletariat frees the means of production from the character of capital they have thus far borne, and gives their socialized character complete freedom to work itself out. Socialized production upon a predetermined plan becomes henceforth possible. The development of production makes the existence of different classes of society thenceforth an anachronism. In proportion as anarchy in social production vanishes, the political authority of the State dies out. Man, at last the master of his own form of social organization, becomes at the same time the lord over Nature, his own master—free." (Engels, *Socialism, Utopian and Scientific*, p. 138.)

There is a considerable body of bourgeois and reformist "theory" aiming to refute the scientific character of the Marxian proposition that the downfall of capitalism and the victory of the proletariat "are equally inevitable". With this angle of the question we have dealt elsewhere in this book. Here we shall concern ourselves with a different set of "arguments" against the validity of the Marxian-Leninist theory of the proletarian revolution. It is argued that this theory may have had a certain validity in the epoch of the "old capitalism", in the epoch of Marx and Engels; it is even grudgingly admitted by some that this theory may still possess a certain validity

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for industrially backward countries, but it does not hold at all for industrially and culturally advanced countries, certainly not for such a country as the United States. Norman Thomas, leader of the Socialist Party of America, is one of the exponents of this latter point of view. Muste & Co. (the Workers Party of the U.S.) and the Lovestone renegades (theory of exceptionalism) advocate a "Left" variety of this standpoint.

It is one of the immortal achievements of Leninism that it has proved, theoretically and practically, that the "new" capitalism (imperialism) has made the inevitability of the proletarian revolution *more inevitable* than ever before, not only in certain countries, but in all countries. And in this sense "imperialism is the eve of the Socialist revolution" (Lenin). Under the heading, "Imperialism and the Downfall of Capitalism", the Program of the Communist International discusses the matter as follows:

> "Imperialism has greatly developed the productive forces of world capitalism. It has completed the preparation of all the material prerequisites for the socialist organization of society. By its wars it has demonstrated that the productive forces of world economy, which have outgrown the restricted boundaries of imperialist States, demand the organization of economy on a world, or international scale. Imperialism tries to remove this contradiction by hacking a road with fire and sword towards a single world State-capitalist trust, which is to organize the whole world economy. This sanguinary utopia is being extolled by the Social-Democratic ideologists as a peaceful method of newly 'organized' capitalism. In reality, this utopia encounters insurmountable objective obstacles of such magnitude that capitalism must inevitably fall beneath the weight of its own contradictions. The law of uneven development of capitalism, which becomes intensified in the epoch of imperialism, renders firm and durable international combinations of imperialist powers impossible. On the other hand, imperialist wars, which are developing into world wars, and by which the law of the centralization of capitalism strives to reach its world limit—a single world trust—are accompanied by so much destruction and place such burdens upon the shoulders of the working class and of the millions of colonial proletarians and peasants, that capitalism must inevitably perish beneath the blows of the proletarian revolution long before this goal is reached.
>
> "Being the highest phase of capitalist development, developing the productive forces of world economy to enormous dimensions, refashioning the whole world after its own image, imperialism draws within the orbit of finance-capitalist exploitation all colonies, all races and all nations. At the same time, however, the monopolistic form of capital increasingly develops the elements of parasitical degeneration, decay and decline of capitalism. By destroying, to some extent, the driving force of competition, by conducting a policy of cartel prices, and by having undivided mastery of the market, monopoly capital reveals a tendency to retard the further development

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> of the forces of production. In squeezing enormous sums of surplus profits out of the millions of colonial workers and peasants and in accumulating colossal incomes from this exploitation, imperialism is creating a type of decaying and parasitically degenerate rentier-class, as well as whole strata of parasites, who live by clipping coupons. While completing the process of creating the material prerequisites for socialism (the concentration of the means of production, the enormous socialization of labor, the growth of labor organizations), the epoch of imperialism intensifies the antagonisms among the 'Great Powers' and gives rise to wars which cause the break-up of single world economy. Imperialism is therefore *moribund and decaying capitalism.* It is the final stage of development of the capitalist system. *It is the threshold of world social revolution.*
>
> "Hence, international proletarian revolution logically emerges out of the conditions of development of capitalism generally, and out of its imperialist phase in particular. The capitalist system as a whole is approaching its final collapse. The dictatorship of finance capital is perishing to give way to *the dictatorship of the proletariat.*"

This answers conclusively the recent brand of half-baked theories that the "new" capitalism—and the "newer" one under Roosevelt's New Deal—is allegedly free from the insoluble contradictions of the old capitalism. And although these "theories" run contrary to everything that has happened in the U.S.A. since the outbreak of the economic crisis in 1929, the bourgeois ideologists, and especially the social-reformists, do not tire of varying their bankrupt ideas of America's being an "exception" to the rest of the capitalist world. The discussion of the economics and politics of American capitalism in the preceding chapters has aimed to show the correctness of the Communist Party position that American imperialism, far from being exempt from the general crisis of capitalism, has been drawn fully into it. The events of the last six years leave no doubt on that score. But there are still lingering illusions as to the possibility of a way out of the general crisis of capitalism for the U.S.A. other than the way of the proletarian revolution. The objective basis of such illusions, cultivated assiduously by social-reformism, is the fact that in the U.S.A. the revolutionary crisis is maturing at a slower tempo than, say, in Germany or India, especially the relatively slow rate of growth of the proletarian revolutionary movement. What this means from the point of view of the objective prerequisites of the proletarian revolution in the U.S.A. is that American capitalism is still not one of the weakest but one of the strongest links in the imperialist chain. *But it is, and this is decisive, a link in the imperialist chain,* subject to all the laws of imperialist development; it is in the last, decaying and dying stage of capitalism; it is on the threshold of the Socialist revolution; it has all the material prerequisites mature for Socialism. And, what is equally decisive,

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this imperialist chain (of which American capitalism is a link) was broken through sixteen years ago by a successful proletarian revolution in a country occupying one-sixth of the earth in which, since then, the foundations of socialism have been laid. The chain has begun to crumble and *every link*, strong and weak, is, though unequally, feeling the effects.

Our approach to the question of the proletarian revolution has undergone a change since the emergence of the imperialist era. Stalin says:

> "Formerly, the analysis of the premises of the proletarian revolution was approached from the point of view of the economic situation in any particular country.
>
> "This method is now inadequate. Today, it must start from the point of view of the economic situation in all, or a majority of, countries—from the point of view of the state of world economy, inasmuch as the individual countries and individual national economies are no longer independent economic units but have become links of a single chain called world economy; and inasmuch as the old civilizing capitalism has grown into imperialism, and imperialism is a world system of financial bondage and of colonial oppression of the vast majority of the population of the globe by a few 'advanced' countries.
>
> "Formerly, it was customary to talk of the existence or absence of objective conditions for the proletarian revolution in individual countries or, to be more exact, in this or that advanced country. This point of view is now inadequate. It is now necessary to take into account the existence of the objective conditions for the revolution throughout the whole system of imperialist world economy which forms an integral unit, for the existence within this system of some countries that are not sufficiently developed from the industrial point of view cannot form an insurmountable obstacle to the revolution, *if* the system as a whole has become, or, to come nearer the truth, *because* the system as a whole has already become, ripe for the revolution.
>
> "Formerly, again, the proletarian revolution in this or that advanced country was regarded as a separate and self-contained unit, facing a separate and distinct national capitalist front, as its opposite pole. Today this point of view is inadequate. Today it is necessary to speak of proletarian world revolution, for the separate national fronts of capital have become links in a single chain called the world front of imperialism, to which should be opposed the united front of the revolutionary movement in all countries.
>
> "Formerly, the proletarian revolution was regarded as the consequence of an exclusively internal development in a given country. At the present time this point of view is inadequate. Today it is necessary to regard the proletarian revolution above all as the result of the development of the contradictions within the world-system of imperialism, as the result of the snapping of the chain of the imperialist world-front in this or that country." (*Foundations of Leninism*, International Publishers, p. 32.)

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From this, of course, certain conclusions follow as to the scheme of the revolution, its route. Stalin, therefore, asks: "Where will the revolution begin, in which country can the front of capital be broken through first?" Formerly, the usual answer was: "Where industry is most developed, where the proletariat constitutes the majority, where there is more culture and more democracy". Is this answer correct now? "No," replies the Leninist theory of revolution, "*not necessarily where industry is highly developed*, etc. The front of capital will break through where the imperialist chain is weakest because the proletarian revolution is the result of a break-up of the chain of the world imperialist front in its weakest spot, and so it may transpire that the country that has begun the revolution, that has broken through the front of capital, appears less developed capitalistically than other more developed countries remaining still within the frame of capitalism" (*ibid.*). For reasons discussed elsewhere in this book, "[in 1917] the chain of the imperialist world front appeared weakest in Russia than in other countries" (*ibid.*). That is why the proletarian revolution began there first. And "where will the chain break through in the near future? Again where it is weakest". Stalin mentions, for example, India, because in that country there is "a young militant revolutionary proletariat having such an ally as the national liberation movement" and because the enemy of the revolution is a foreign imperialism having no moral prestige in the country, an enemy that has earned "the general hatred of the oppressed and exploited masses of India". Stalin mentions Germany where the world imperialist chain may break next, and in general: "The chain of the imperialist front should break, as a rule, where the links of the chain are weakest and, it is certain, at any rate, not necessarily where capitalism is more developed . . ." (*ibid.*).

There was a time, in the early phases of the Soviet Union, when the chief social-reformist argument was that the Socialist revolution in Russia cannot and will not succeed because of the latter's backwardness. In fact the "argument" was a flat assertion that the November revolution was not a Socialist revolution at all and would not lead to Socialism. The chief stress then was laid upon discrediting the proletarian revolution in Russia (a backward country can have no Socialist Revolution) and in this way to hamper the adoption of the "Russan way" to the other countries.

It will be seen that Trotzky's theory as to the impossibility of building Socialism in one country, especially in what was formerly Russia, is only a variation of Menshevism, or social-reformism. Later on, and particularly after the victory of the first Five-Year Plan, the chief stress of the social-reformist arguments against the proletarian revolution is being laid elsewhere, namely, the attempt is being

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made to "prove" that, while the Bolshevik way may have been inevitable in a "backward" country like Russia, it is not inevitable and is inapplicable to the advanced capitalist countries of Europe and America.

Before we proceed to discuss this latter-day attack of social-reformism upon the proletarian revolution, it is necessary to clarify further the meaning of the idea of "the weakest link" in the world imperialist chain. There is, for instance, Bukharin's understanding of it as "the weakest national-economic system". In his work, *The Economics of the Transition Period*, Bukharin wrote: "Hence the collapse of the world capitalist system began from the weakest national-economic systems, from the least developed State capitalist organizations".

To which Lenin made the following annotation: "Wrong: from the 'medium-weak'. Without a definite height of capitalism, with us nothing would have come out." Clearly, the weakest link in the imperialist chain is *not the same thing* as the weakest national-economy.

Says Stalin:

> "In no case is it permissible to place *the sign of identity* between the thesis 'the imperialist chain breaks where it is weakest' and the thesis of Comrade Bukharin 'the imperialist chain breaks where the national-economic system is weakest'. Why? Because in the first case the talk is about the weakness of the imperialist chain *which must be torn asunder, i.e.*, of the weakness of the imperialist forces, whereas with Bukharin the talk is of the weakness of the national-economic system of the country *which* (the country) *must tear asunder* the imperialist chain, *i.e.*, of the weakness of the *anti*-imperialist forces. This is not at all the same thing. Moreover, these are two opposite theses. From Bukharin it follows that the imperialist front breaks where the national-economic system is weakest of all. This, of course, is untrue. Were it true, the proletarian revolution would have begun somewhere in Central Africa but not in Russia.
>
> "Whereas in the article 'Introduction to Leninism' is said something *directly contrary* to the thesis of Comrade Bukharin, namely, that the imperialist chain breaks where it (the chain) is weakest. And this is perfectly correct. The chain of world imperialism breaks in a given country precisely for the reason that it (the chain) *is weakest at a given moment* precisely in that country. Otherwise it would not have broken. Otherwise the Mensheviks would have been right in their struggle against Leninism.
>
> "But what is it that determines the weakness of the imperialist chain in a given country? It is the presence of a certain minimum of industrial development and culture in that country. It is the presence within it of a certain minimum of industrial proletariat, the revolutionary qualities of the proletariat and the proletarian vanguard in that country. It is the presence of a serious ally of the proletariat (for instance, the peasantry) able to follow the pro-

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letariat in decisive struggle against imperialism. It is determined, consequently, by the confluence of conditions making inevitable the isolation and overthrow of imperialism in that country." (*Pravda*, December 18, 1929.)

Thus we see that it was not the industrial backwardness or weakness of Russia that made it the first country of the proletarian revolution but the weakness of the imperialist forces and the strength and revolutionary readiness of the anti-imperialist forces. Russia's industrial backwardness (and also its being the first proletarian State) had a good deal to do with the specific difficulties encountered there by the proletarian dictatorship in the building of Socialism. But this, too, had been overcome as was foretold and theoretically proved by Lenin and Stalin in the theory of the possibility of constructing Socialism in one country.

Now, it would appear (if we believe the social-reformists, a la Thomas) that the proletarian revolution may be possible in a "backward" country but is impossible in an advanced country, such as the U.S.A. The "arguments" usually advanced are the flimsiest imaginable, mostly pacifist hash and counter-revolutionary incitement along the Trotzkyist pattern. Theoretically the solution of the question rests on a correct understanding of the law of uneven economic and political development of capitalism, especially as it operates in the era of imperialism. It is from this law, as we have shown elsewhere, that Lenin deduced the possibility of the victory of Socialism in one country, provided there was a certain minimum of industrial development, proletarian strength, and a revolutionary organization. The law of uneven development proceeds from the following propositions:

"1. The old pre-monopolist capitalism has grown over and developed into monopoly capitalism, into imperialism;

"2. The division of the world into spheres of influence between imperialist groups and Powers is already completed;

"3. The development of world economy takes place in the surroundings of desperate mortal struggle of the imperialist groups for markets, raw materials, for the extension of old spheres of influence;

"4. This development takes place not evenly but by leaps and bounds, displacing from the markets the Powers already there and bringing forward new ones;

"5. The way of development is determined by the possibility for one set of imperialist groups to develop most rapidly their technique, cheapening commodities and seizing markets to the detriment of other imperialist groups;

"6. Periodic redivisions of the already divided world thus become an absolute necessity;

"7. These redivisions can occur, consequently, only by means of violence, in the way of trying out by force the power of this or the other imperialist group;

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"8. This circumstance cannot but lead to increased conflicts and tremendous wars between the imperialist groups;

"9. Such a condition inevitably leads to a mutual weakening of the imperialists and creates the possibility of a break through the imperialist front in single countries;

"10. The possibility of a break through the imperialist front in single countries cannot but create favorable conditions for the victory of Socialism in one country." (Stalin, "On the Social-Democratic Deviation in our Party".)

Combatting the Lenin-Stalin theory of the possibility of the victory of Socialism in one country, Trotzky also denied the law of uneven development. He asserted that there was more uneven development in the period of pre-monopoly capitalism than in the period of imperialism. This effort Stalin exposes as follows:

"He [Trotzky] confuses here the *economic inequality* of single countries in the past—which inequality did not always lead and could not lead to their development by leaps and bounds—with the uneven economic and political development in the period of imperialism, when there is less economic inequality than in the past but incomparably more unevenness of economic and political development, and manifests itself much sharper than before; in addition, this unevenness necessarily and inevitably leads to development by leaps and bounds, leading to this that the industrially lagging countries surpass the advanced countries in a more or less short period, which cannot but create in this way the prerequisites for tremendous wars and for the possibility of the victory of Socialism in one country." (*Ibid.*)

The uneven economic and political development is, as Lenin said, an unconditional law of capitalism, which manifests itself more sharply and assumes a decisive significance under imperialism. This is determined by the following two circumstances:

"First, by the fact that the division of the world between the imperialist groups is complete, 'free' lands there are no more and a redivision of the already divided world appears an absolute necessity for the achievement of an economic 'balance' by means of imperialist war; secondly, by the fact that the unheard of colossal development of technique, in the wide sense of the word, helps one set of imperialist groups to surpass other imperialist groups in the struggle for the conquest of markets, for the seizure of sources of raw materials, etc. But these circumstances have appeared and reached their highest point only in the period of developed imperialism." (*Ibid.*)

It is this law of uneven development that explains the leap of American imperialism to first place in a relatively very short period of time.

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> "If formerly England could stay industrially ahead of all States, leaving them behind for a period of more than one hundred years, Germany, on the other hand, in the period of monopoly capital, required some two decades to surpass England, and America required even less time to surpass the European States." (*Ibid.*)

This leap of American capitalism, as is known, occurred during the imperialist war and in the years immediately following, resulting in the "transference of the economic center of capitalism from Europe to America" (Sixth C.I. Congress). This fact was seized upon by the bourgeois ideologists in the U.S.A. (and elsewhere) to proclaim the arrival of an epoch of endless prosperity in the U.S.A. on the basis of which all sorts of flimsy theories were formulated to show that American capitalism had discovered the secret of youth and of eternal life. Social-reformism fell in, naturally, with these theories, building them up to the astounding assertions that Henry Ford (mass production and "high wages") has abolished the contradictions of capitalism and, hence, the theory of Marx. The Socialist Party of America, confident in the eternal triumphant march of American capitalism, found it possible, in those years, to throw off even its mask of class struggle, removing from its program all reference to it. And the new "Big Gun" in the camp of counter-revolutionary Trotzkyism—Muste—to gain the ears of the workers "confesses" now that in 1929 he still believed "that we had a unique economic system from which unemployment and poverty were forever banished [this—with four million permanently unemployed in 1929, before the outbreak of the economic crisis!] which was not subject to the vicissitudes of ordinary countries" (*Modern Monthly*, January, 1934).

It was, of course, not given to social-reformism to understand the meaning and consequences of the fact that American capitalism surpassed European capitalism, because it is only the Marxist-Leninist theory, especially the law of uneven development, that explains these changes. It was this law which showed and foretold that the transference of the economic center of capitalism from Europe to America would sharpen immeasurably, and increasingly so, all the internal and external contradictions of imperialism; that it would strain to the utmost the chain of world imperialism, leading to a mutual weakening of the imperialist forces in all countries, with the weakest links in the chain of the world imperialist front reaching the breaking point, the whole chain becoming weaker, and the prerequisites of a revolutionary crisis maturing unevenly in all countries. The actual course of events in the post-War period fully demonstrated the correctness of the Communist position.

By jumping ahead of the other capitalist Powers, American capitalism became subject, not less *but more*, to the laws of imperialist

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development and to the general crisis of capitalism. Certain specific features and peculiarities American capitalism had and still has; the size of the country, its natural wealth, the almost complete absence of feudal remnants and relationships (excepting the South, especially the Black Belt), the geographic proximity of large fields for colonial exploitation in the Caribbean and South America, its peculiar role in the world imperialist war which transformed the U.S.A. from an importer into an exporter of capital, the high degree of industrial development coupled with a widely developed agriculture of food and raw materials.

It was these specific and peculiar characteristics of capitalism in the U.S.A. that are responsible for the fact that it was *American* capitalism and not some other of the younger capitalist countries that had leaped to first place during the War and immediate post-War period. But the reason such a leap was possible at all was that the U.S.A. was a capitalist country, a link in the chain of world imperialism, whose basic and general features were the same as those of all other capitalist countries. The leap to first place expressed itself in a tremendous growth of technique and production, accumulation and export of capital, growth of productive capacity, growth in the export of goods, etc. With it went a corresponding growth of the economic and political power of American imperialism. Contrasting these developments in the U.S.A. with the simultaneous decline of British imperialism and the lagging behind of the other capitalist Powers, the ideologists of the American bourgeoisie and the social-reformists set up the evangel that American capitalism is something apart from and above capitalism as a whole, that it was an exception to capitalism in other countries, that it was exempt from the class struggle and from the proletarian revolution. These "prognostications", as we know, all went by the board, as they were bound to. What was the trouble with them? The trouble with these prophesies was that they ignored three considerations:

1. That growth of capitalist production (and American production was capitalist) reproduces all the contradictions of capitalism on a wider scale and in sharper form.

2. That the leap forward by American capitalism, demonstrating the law of uneven development, would inevitably lead, not only to a terrific sharpening of imperialist rivalries and the war danger, but also to a growing sharpening of the class relations and class struggle within the U.S.A. as well as to a sharpening of the relations between American imperialism and its colonies and dependencies; one aggravating the other and creating prerequisites for a revolutionary crisis in the U.S.A.

3. That all this was taking place in the period of the general crisis of world capitalism, in the epoch of world revolution and the

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emergence of a center of a new world system—the Socialist system of the U.S.S.R. Having overlooked just these three considerations, the bourgeois and social-reformist "prognostications" regarding the smooth and constant growth of capitalism in the U.S.A. were bound to land in the discard.

It will be recalled that the years of 1924-29 in the U.S.A. were characterized, among other things, by a regular "ideological" orgy derived from the so-called "exceptional" position of American capitalism. This had its effects also on the Communist Party of the U.S.A. What were opportunist "stabilization moods" among the weaker parts of the Communist Parties in Europe assumed here the form of opportunist rationalizations of the specific and peculiar characteristics of American capitalism which led to an exaggeration of the strength and stability of American capitalism. Stalin said:

> "It has become evident during the course of the discussion that both groups are guilty of the fundamental error of exaggerating the specific features of American capitalism" and "that this exaggeration lies at the root of every opportunist error committed both by the Majority and the Minority group." (Speech in the American Commission of the Presidium of the E.C.C.I., May 6, 1929. The groups referred to were the majority group headed by Lovestone and the minority headed by Foster and Bittelman.)

Continuing, Stalin said:

> "It would be wrong to ignore the specific peculiarities of American capitalism. The Communist Party in its work must take them into account. But it would be still more wrong to base the activities of the Communist Party on these specific features, since the foundation of the activities of every Communist Party, including the American Communist Party, on which it must base itself, must be the general features of capitalism, which are the same for all countries, and not its specific features in any given country. It is on this that the internationalism of the Communist Party is founded. Specific features are only supplementary to the general features." (*Ibid.*)

And further:

> "It cannot be denied that American conditions form a medium in which it is easy for the American Communist Party to be led astray and to exaggerate the strength and stability of American capitalism. These conditions lead our comrades from America, both the Majority and the Minority, into errors of the type of the Right deviation. Owing to these conditions, at times one section, at others, the other section, fails to realize the full extent of reformism in America, underestimates the Leftward swing of the working class and, in general, is inclined to regard American capitalism as something apart from and above world capitalism. That is the basis for the unsteadiness of both sections of the American Communist Party in matters of principle." (*Ibid.*)

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Speaking of this same fundamental error of the Majority and Minority of the C.P.U.S.A., the E.C.C.I. said:

"At the same time the Majority and Minority commit the same mistake in their view of the relations between the American and world economic systems, although expressed in different forms, and both groups make different conclusions. This mistake lies in their wrong conception of the nature of the relationship between American and world economics and the underestimation of the increasing involving of American imperialism in the rapidly sharpening general crisis of capitalism. Both sides are inclined to regard American imperialism as isolated from world capitalism, as independent from it and developing according to its own laws. Both sides do not take sufficiently into account that the approaching crisis of American imperialism is part and parcel of the general crisis of capitalism. Both sides believe that world economy plays in relation to American imperialism only or chiefly a subordinate and passive role of a market for the export of commodities and capital.

"The failure to understand the close relations between American economy and the general crisis of capitalism leads the Majority to a wrong estimation of the role of American capital in the stabilization of Europe, and to a misconception of the inevitable sharpening of the conflicts between the evermore aggressive American imperialism and trustified Europe, which strives to free itself from the economic domination of the United States. It leads the Minority to the conception that the coming crisis of American capitalism is called forth exclusively by its internal contradictions.

"These mistakes reflect the failure to understand the fact that the roots of the contemporary general crisis of capitalism, side by side with the sharpening contradictions between the development of the productive forces and the contraction of markets, side by side with the existence and development of the U.S.S.R. as a factor which revolutionizes the working class of all countries and the toiling masses of the colonies, and stands opposed to the world capitalist system, there is also the unequal growth in the economic development of the various countries which has its expression in the transference of the economic center of capitalism from Europe to America and the rapid development of American imperialism which *surpasses the development* of the other capitalist countries.

"The rapid development of American capitalism *does not exempt* the United States, or any other capitalist country, from the crisis; on the contrary, it *accentuates* the general crisis of capitalism as a result of the extreme sharpening of all contradictions which it leads to. On the other hand, a sharpening of the general crisis of capitalism is to be expected not because American imperialism ceases to develop, but on the contrary, it is to be expected because American imperialism is developing and surpasses the other capitalist countries in its development, which leads to an extreme accentuation of all antagonisms.

"The failure to understand the nature of the general crisis of American capitalism inevitably leads to a distortion of the entire revolutionary perspective outlined in the decisions of the Sixth Congress [of the C.I.] in connection with the third period. To consider American capitalism isolated from the sharply accentuated gen-

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> eral crisis of capitalism means to overlook the general revolutionary crisis of capitalism which includes the economic crises in all capitalist countries, the imperialist struggle against the U.S.S.R. and the rebelling colonies, the struggle among the imperialist countries themselves, as well as the class struggle of the proletariat in the various capitalist countries." (Open Letter of the E.C.C.I. to the Sixth Convention of the Workers (Communist) Party of America.)*

The author of this book is able to say, as a member of the former Minority of the American Communist Party, that the above criticisms of the errors of the Minority (exaggeration of the specific features of American capitalism) are not only fully correct but that he himself was greatly responsible for these errors.

Even more specifically and concretely were the errors of the Majority and Minority on this fundamental question analyzed in the "Address by the E.C.C.I. to the members of the C.P.U.S.A.", issued in May, 1929. We quote the following relevant sections:

> "Since the Sixth World Congress of the Communist International the Majority of the Central Committee of the American Communist Party has been committing a series of gross Right errors pointed out in the Open Letter of the E.C.C.I. These errors found their expression in overestimating American imperialism and putting the question of inner and outer contradictions in a wrong way, which led to the obscuring of the inner contradictions of American capitalism; in understanding the swing to the Left of the American working class; in underestimating American reformism which led to weakening the struggle against it; in underestimating the Right danger in the American Communist Party; in substituting in place of the question of the Right opportunist danger only the question of Trotzkyism, in dealing with the question in a manner which led to the Right danger."

And of the Minority it says the following:

> "The Minority of the Central Committee of the American Communist Party was committing, in regard to questions dealing with the crisis of American capitalism and the swing of the masses to the Left, 'Left' but in reality Right opportunist errors; it dissociated the development of the inner contradictions of American capitalism from its external contradictions and from the general crisis of world capitalism, and, in regard to the question of struggle against the war-danger, it was sliding down to petty-bourgeois pacifist slogans ('No New Cruisers'—Comrade Bittelman). The Minority of the Central Committee was unable to dissociate itself at the right time from Trotzkyism and did not properly struggle against it." (*Ibid.*)

As already pointed out, the root of the Right errors in the Party lay in the fundamentally wrong conception that American capitalism

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* Cited from *International Press Correspondence*, Vol. 9, No. 12, 1929, page 210.

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was exempt—exceptional—from the basic laws of capitalist development *in the present epoch.*

> "An ideological lever of Right errors in the American Communist Party was the so-called theory of 'exceptionalism', which found its clearest exponents in the persons of Comrades Pepper and Lovestone whose conception was as follows: There is a crisis of capitalism, but not of American capitalism; there is a swing of the masses Leftward, but not in America; there is the necessity of accentuating the struggle against reformism, but not in the United States." (*Ibid.*)

But what was the true condition in the U.S.A.? Says the E.C.C.I. Address:

> "And yet, the present period, when the process shaking the foundations of capitalist stabilization is going on, signifies for the United States that it is being ever more closely involved in the general crisis of capitalism. In America, too, the fundamental contradictions of capitalism—the contradiction between the growth of the productive forces and the lagging behind of the markets—is becoming more accentuated. The bourgeoisie is increasing its efforts to find a way out of the growing crisis by means of rationalization, *i.e.*, by increased exploitation of the working class. The internal class contradictions are growing; the struggle for markets and spheres for investment of capital against other imperialist States is becoming more accentuated; there is feverish growth of armaments and the war danger is getting nearer and nearer. With a distinctness unprecedented in history, American capitalism is exhibiting now the effects of the inexorable laws of capitalist development, the laws of the decline and downfall of capitalist society. The general crisis of capitalism is growing more rapidly than it may seem at first glance. This crisis will shake also the foundation of the power of American imperialism." (*Ibid.*)

It will be easily recognized that the theory of American exceptionalism, most clearly advocated by Pepper and Lovestone, bears a definite kinship to the theories of the American bourgeoisie and of the social-reformists.

> "Under these conditions the theory of 'exceptionalism' is a reflection of the pressure of American capitalism and reformism which is endeavoring to create among the mass of workers the impression of absolute firmness and 'exceptional' imperialist might of American capital in spite of its growing crisis and to strengthen the tactic of class collaboration in spite of the accentuation of class contradictions." (*Ibid.*)

Persistence in the theory of "exceptionalism" and opposition to the objectively correct and revolutionary position of the Communist International and its Section in the U.S.A. have landed Lovestone &

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Co. and the Trotzkyites in the camp of renegades and counter-revolution.

* * * * *

THE CHARACTER OF THE REVOLUTION IN THE U.S.A.

The maturing revolution in the U.S.A. is a proletarian Socialist revolution; and an organic part of this revolution is the national-revolutionary movement of the Negroes, the fight for the self-determination of the Negro masses in the Black Belt. Speaking of the character of the revolution in "countries of highly developed capitalism", such as the U.S.A., countries "having powerful productive forces, highly centralized production, with small-scale production reduced to relative insignificance, and a long established bourgeois-democratic political system", the Program of the C.I. says:

> "In such countries the fundamental political demand of the program is direct transition to the dictatorship of the proletariat. In the economic sphere, the most characteristic demands are: expropriation of the whole of large scale industry; organization of a large number of State Soviet farms and, in contrast to this, a relatively small portion of the land to be transferred to the peasantry; unregulated market relations to be given comparatively small scope; rapid rate of Socialist development generally, and of collectivization of peasant farming in particular."

What are the characteristic features of the proletarian revolution as distinguished from the bourgeois revolution? Says Stalin:

> "1. The bourgeois revolution usually begins at a time when the capitalist forms which, prior to the manifest revolution, have made their appearance and begun to ripen within the womb of feudal society, are already more or less developed. The proletarian revolution begins at a time when socialist forms either do not exist at all, or are almost completely lacking.
>
> "2. The fundamental task of the bourgeois revolution is to seize power and to adapt that power to the already existing bourgeois economy. The fundamental task of the proletarian revolution is, on seizing power, to construct a new socialist economy.
>
> "3. The bourgeois revolution usually ends with the seizure of power. For the proletarian revolution the seizure of power is only a beginning; power, when seized, is used as a lever for the transformation of the old economy and for the organization of a new one.
>
> "4. The bourgeois revolution being no more than the replacement of one group of exploiters by another in the seat of power, has no need to destroy the old State machine; but the proletarian revolution means that the groups of exploiters one and all have been excluded from power, and that the leaders of all the workers, the leaders of all the exploited, the leaders of the proletarian class, have come to occupy the seat of power, and they therefore have no

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option but to destroy the old State machine and to replace it by a new one.

"5. The bourgeois revolution cannot for any long period enjoy the support of the working and exploited masses, for the simple reason that the millions, the masses, are workers and are exploited; but the proletarian revolution can and must consolidate all who labor and all the exploited in a lasting alliance with the proletariat, for otherwise it cannot carry out its fundamental task of consolidating the power of the proletariat and upbuilding a new, a socialist economy." (*Leninism*, Vol. I, p. 20.)

Stalin then asks:

"Is an upheaval of this kind, is a radical transformation of the old bourgeois system of society, possible without a forcible revolution; is it possible without establishing the dictatorship of the proletariat?

"Obviously not. To think that such a revolution can be carried out peacefully within the framework of bourgeois democracy, within the framework of the system that is adapted to maintain bourgeois rule, means one of two things. Either it means madness, an inability to understand the normal significance of words; or else it means a cynical repudiation of the proletarian revolution." (*Ibid.*)

The truth of this is beginning to dawn upon ever larger numbers of non-Party workers in the U.S.A., including workers that still follow the Socialist Party. Especially so after the German, Austrian, and British experiences with "democratic" Socialism, with the fraudulent policies of the reformists to build socialism within the frame of bourgeois democracy. Norman Thomas, therefore, feels the need of injecting a bit of "Left" demagogy on this point. He writes:

". . . We need not be uncritical of our present mechanical and hypocritical democracy, but on the contrary. No Socialist Party, for instance, can permit its followers to identify democracy with rigid constitutionalism or to encourage the delusion that the present scheme of government in America is suitable to the new society or the transition to it. An effective mandate for Socialism must be a mandate for change in the forms of government and many of the processes under which today the rule of privilege masquerades as democracy." (*The Choice Before Us.*)

In vain would one seek here a *class* analysis of the present "democracy", or a class analysis of the very *nature* of State power; it remains for some mystery to explain why our present "democracy" is "mechanical and hypocritical". But let us see what changes in "the present scheme of government" Thomas has invented to make the government more "suitable to the new society or the transition to it". The invention is . . . a "double type of representation in one chamber". And in this way:

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> ". . . authority in the cooperative commonwealth should rest in a single-chambered congress, not too large for proper discussion to which the executive should be responsible. Voters should vote for a certain number of Congressmen to be elected in the nation at large and a somewhat greater number to be elected one for each district. To these should be added *another group*, not over a third of the whole, *to be elected by workers* to represent their own industries. By and large the permanent interests of workers as consumers and citizens can best be furthered by representatives chosen on the geographical principle; their permanent interests as producers, by representatives chosen on the occupational principle." (*Ibid*—our emphasis.)

So, the great invention is the old House of Representatives based on a double principle of election: geographic and occupational. This is intended to deceive the workers into believing that Thomas (as spokesman of the S.P.) is making a move away from "democratic" socialism and in the direction of something new, something that has the appearance of a workers' government. But it is nothing of the kind. German Social-Democracy was toying for a while with even more "radical" propositions in 1918 and later in order, however, to tame the existing Councils of Workers' and Soldiers' Deputies and to check and suppress the incipient struggles of these Councils for full power. And "Left" Social-Democracy, the Independent Social-Democratic Party, even developed the "idea" of combining Soviets with bourgeois democracy, all this for the same purpose as subordinating the Councils to bourgeois democracy in order later to destroy them altogether. And this was what German Social-Democracy, Right and "Left", actually did. This maneuver of combining Soviets with bourgeois democracy was resorted to by Social-Democracy in order to deceive and confuse the German workers so as to suppress more easily the developing proletarian revolution, the Soviet revolution in 1918, by force of arms.

It will thus be seen easily that what Thomas has invented here, a one-chambered Congress based on geographic and occupational representation, is nothing else but a cowardly and halting approach to the old Social-Democratic trick of combining Soviets with bourgeois democracy.

There is no doubt that as the working class in the U.S.A. will be approaching the direct struggle foe power and will begin to organize Soviets (as was the situation in Germany in 1918) the Thomases will come out more "boldly" for the full maneuver of German Social-Democracy, for the more "Left" demagogic trick of combining existing Soviets with bourgeois democracy—the purpose always remaining the same, namely, to save bourgeois democracy and the dictatorship of the bourgeoisie.

The maturing revolution in the U.S.A., as already shown, is a proletarian revolution whose basic political demand is the direct transi-

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tion to the dictatorship of the proletariat; one of the allies of the proletarian revolution is the national liberation movement of the Negroes, the latter being in the nature of a bourgeois-democratic revolution (national and agrarian) as a transition stage towards the proletarian revolution. The Program of the C.I. declares:

> "The uneven development of capitalism, which became more accentuated in the period of imperialism, has given rise to a variety of types of capitalism, to different stages of ripeness of capitalism in different countries, and to a variety of specific conditions of the revolutionary process. These circumstances make it historically inevitable *that the proletariat will come to power by a variety of ways and degrees of rapidity;* that a number of countries must pass through certain transition stages leading to the dictatorship of the proletariat and must adopt varied forms of Socialist construction."

We have seen that even within the territorial confines of the U.S.A. the uneven development of capitalism produces "a variety of ways and degrees of rapidity" to the dictatorship of the proletariat between the country as a whole (direct transition to the dictatorship of the proletariat) and the Black Belt of the South which will have to pass a series of preparatory stages of transformation of bourgeois-democratic revolution into Socialist revolution. The slogan of power for the revolution in the U.S.A., including the Black Belt, is the slogan of *Soviet Power*, which, *as a State form*, stands for both the proletarian revolution and the bourgeois-democratic revolution; only its *class content* is different in the two cases. In the proletarian revolution of the U.S.A., "The Soviet Power is the State form of the proletarian dictatorship"; in the national-agrarian revolution of the Negroes in the Black Belt "the Soviet Power is the State form of the revolutionary democratic dictatorship of the proletariat and the peasants, which ensures the growing over of the bourgeois-democratic revolution into a socialist revolution (China, etc.)." (Thesis of the Thirteenth Plenum of the C.I.) The C.P.U.S.A. has rejected the characterization of the Black Belt as a colony of the U.S.A. but it insists that national oppression in the Black Belt is fundamentally of the same character as that in the colonies, that the agrarian question lies at the basis of national oppression of the Negroes in the Black Belt and that the national oppression in the latter is "in many respects worse than in a number of actual colonies" (C.I. Resolution). Hence, the immediate task here is the national agrarian revolution and the establishment of the revolutionary democratic dictatorship of the proletariat and the peasants in the form of Soviet Power which "ensures the growing over of the bourgeois-democratic revolution into a socialist revolution",

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From this follows a difference in the *moving forces* of the general proletarian revolution in the U.S.A., on the one hand, and in the national agrarian revolution of the Negroes in the Black Belt, on the other. The relationship of *class forces* in a bourgeois revolution, Lenin has formulated thus:

> "The proletariat, joining to itself the peasantry, will neutralize the liberal bourgeoisie and utterly destroy the monarchy, medievalism and landlordism." And he explained that, "the alliance between the proletariat and the peasantry *in general* reveals the bourgeois character of the revolution because the peasantry in general are small producers who stand on the basis of commodity production."

In the proletarian revolution the relationship of class forces is different. In this case

> ". . . the proletariat will join to itself *the whole of the semi-proletariat* (all the toilers and all those who are exploited), will neutralize the middle peasantry and *overthrow* the bourgeoisie: this will be the socialist revolution, as distinct from the bourgeois-democratic revolution" (Lenin, *The Proletarian Revolution and Renegade Kautsky*).

The question has been raised as to which will come first: the general proletarian revolution in the U.S.A. or the national agrarian revolution of the Negroes in the Black Belt? The C. I. Resolution on the Negro Question of the U.S.A. (October, 1930) goes into this question as follows:

> "One cannot deny that it is just possible for the Negro population of the Black Belt to win the right to self-determination during capitalism; but it is perfectly clear and indubitable that this is possible only through successful revolutionary struggle *for power* [our emphasis] against the American bourgeoisie, through *wresting* the Negroes' right to self-determination from American imperialism. Thus the slogan of right to self-determination is a real slogan of national rebellion. . . ."

And further:

> "Insofar as successes in the national-revolutionary struggle of the Negro population of the South for its right to self-determination are already possible under capitalism, they can be achieved only if this struggle is effectively supported by proletarian mass actions on a large scale in the other parts of the United States."

The C.I. Resolution then raises the very important question as to whether the victory of the national-agrarian revolution of the Negroes in the South, will be a *final victory* in the interests of the predominating mass of the Negro population of the country. And

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it answers, quoting the Colonial Theses of the Sixth World Congress of the C.I.:

> "But it is also clear that 'only a victorious proletarian revolution will *finally decide* the agrarian question and the national question in the South of the United States in the interests of the predominating mass of the Negro population of the country."

The C.I. Resolution then concludes as follows:

> "Whether the rebellion of the Negroes is to be the outcome of a general revolutionary situation in the United States, whether it is to originate in the whirlpool of decisive fights for power by the working class, or whether on the contrary the Negro rebellion *will be the prelude of gigantic struggles for power by the American proletariat* [our emphasis], cannot be foretold now. But in either contingency it is essential for the Communist Party *to make an energetic beginning now—at the present moment—with the organization of joint mass struggles* of white and black workers against Negro oppression."

And this is the policy of the Communist Party of the United States.

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For the Workers' Bill!

By EARL BROWDER

(The following is the text of the speech delivered by Earl Browder, Secretary of the Communist Party, before the second session of the National Congress for Social and Unemployment Insurance, Washington, D. C., January 6, 1935.)

FELLOW workers and friends:

The Workers' Unemployment and Social Insurance Bill, which is the main concern of this Congress, has the active and unconditional support of the Communist Party, for which I am speaking.

I want to express my appreciation for the support that was expressed by the previous speaker, Mr. Mitchell, a leading member of the Socialist Party. We Communists are very glad to extend a hand to all Socialists who join with us in this fight, together with all the other workers of all parties who are rallying around this Workers' Bill.

It is also good that we have had the letter of good wishes to the Congress from the principal leader of the Socialist Party, Mr. Norman Thomas. We can express the hope that this letter may help to bring the whole Socialist Party into this movement in the not distant future.

The President of the American Federation of Labor, William Green, has denounced this Bill in a letter to all trade unions of the A. F. of L. which cites two main arguments in opposition. These are, first, that the Bill was written and proposed by the Communist Party; and second, that it is unconstitutional.

As to the first charge: It is true that the Communist Party worked out this Bill, after long consultation with large numbers of workers, popularized it, and brought millions of Americans to see that this Bill is the only proposal for unemployment insurance that meets their life needs. But that is not an argument against the Bill; that is only a recommendation for the Communist Party—for which we thank Mr. Green most kindly, even though his intentions were not friendly.

We Communists have no desire to keep this Bill as "our own" private property; we have tried to make it the common property of all the toiling masses; we have tried to bring every organization of

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workers (and also of farmers and the middle classes) to look upon this Bill as "their own". Thousands of A. F. of L. locals, scores of Socialist Party organizations, dozens of Farmer-Labor Party locals, claim the Bill as theirs. That is good, that is splendid; the Communist Party, far from disputing title to the Bill with anyone, agrees with everyone who claims the Bill. We are ready to support any better proposal, no matter who should make it. Of course the Bill is yours; it belongs to the entire working class, to all the toiling masses of America. In this fact we find our greatest triumph.

ARGUMENTS ABOUT "CONSTITUTIONALITY" OF THE BILL

Mr. Green's second charge, that the Bill is unconstitutional, is a more complicated question. This is a legal point, on which the last word will be said by the Supreme Court, a small body of elderly gentlemen who are famous for their obstinate defense of capitalist property and profits rather than for defense of the vital interests of the masses. But we can warn the Supreme Court and the capitalist class for which it speaks, that on the day when the court declares the Constitution forbids the *only* measure that promises to remove the daily menace of starvation from over the heads of millions, on that day it has struck a blow against the Constitution far deeper and more effective than anything revolutionists have ever done.

If the Constitution prevents the principles of the Workers' Bill from becoming law, then millions will conclude, not that the Workers' Bill must be given up, but that the Constitution must be changed. They will remember the words of the Declaration of Independence, that

> " . . . whenever any form of government becomes destructive of these ends [life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness], it is the right of the people to alter or abolish it, and to institute a new government, laying its foundation on such principles, and organizing its powers in such form, as to them shall seem most likely to affect their safety and happiness. . . . It is their right, it is their duty, to throw off such government, and to provide new guards for their future security."

This revolutionary spirit, which gave birth to the U.S., still lives and grows in the working class. Never was security more shattered for the masses of the people than today; never were new guards for security more needed; and if the Constitution stands in the way, then the Declaration of Independence points out the right, nay, the duty, to "throw off" this Constitution and write a new one in keeping with modern needs. The toiling masses must prepare a new Declaration of Independence—this time independence from the capitalist class.

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CAPITALIST PROFIT BLOCKS MASS NEEDS

Of course, the real obstacle is not the Constitution but the greedy interests of the profit-makers, of the capitalists, of Wall Street. Unemployment and social insurance must be paid for; it will cost great sums. There is plenty of wealth in this great, rich country to pay for it—but it is all in the hands of the rich, the bankers, the monopolists. These gentlemen know this full well, that the poverty-stricken masses cannot pay, because they, the rich, have stolen all the accumulated wealth and natural resources of the country. That fact is itself the cause and basis of the crisis, of unemployment. These gentlemen are determined not to pay one cent; instead, they wriggle out of paying even the present legal taxes, and indeed obtain hundreds of millions of dollars in tax refunds.

THE RICH MUST PAY

The Workers' Bill, and the Communist Party, declare that the cost of full insurance for all must be paid by the only ones who can pay—by the rich. Instead of the Roosevelt New Deal policy, which is taxing the poor in order further to subsidize the rich, which increased profits while lowering living standards, we demand that the government shall tax the rich to feed the poor.

It is not alone the unemployed and their families who need and demand the Workers' Bill. Also the workers in the factories, in the trade unions, need it just as much, to remove the pressure of the starving millions, to prevent their recruitment into the factories at lower wages, to prevent strike-breaking, to help build powerful trade unions, to hold up the whole standard of living of all the masses as the pre-condition of holding up the standards of even a part. It is needed by the farmers, who cannot sell their produce to millions without income, and who are therefore told to destroy their crops while these millions go hungry. It is needed by the middle classes, professionals, small business men who are also being crushed into poverty, because with the impoverishment of the masses their own field of business is destroyed. Everyone needs the Workers' Bill except the bankers, monopolists, big capitalists, Wall Street.

ROOSEVELT'S FALSE PROMISES

President Roosevelt, when appealing for election in 1932, promised unemployment insurance. Two years have passed, and nothing has been done about it. Last summer he renewed his promises, in anticipation of the Congressional elections, and broadened it into the high-sounding phrase of "social security". But, with the elections

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over, he has discovered once more that "social security" must wait upon the security of private profits of the rich. Once again we are given the mockery of the Wagner Bill and forced labor for a part of the unemployed at subsistence wages, the systematic forcing down of the living standards of the whole American people; once again we are told that insurance can only be in the form of "reserves" collected from the workers by the various states for *future* unemployment, ignoring the 16,000,000 now out of work. They forget that if *present* unemployment is not met by real unemployment insurance, all their measures for the *future* will also become meaningless, for the masses will rise and throw off their power and write a whole new set of laws.

WALL STREET CONTROLS CAPITALIST PARTIES

The Democratic Party, controlling Congress, is *against* real unemployment insurance. The Republican Party, which would like to control Congress, is even more unanimously opposed to it. Both these parties are owned, body and soul, by the capitalist class. They will do nothing—until we convince them that the masses of the people are "fed up" with their old two-party system, and are preparing to "vote with their feet" by walking out of the old parties in million masses.

Millions of toilers already showed, in the great strike wave and in the November elections, that they are getting tired of the old game. It is not an accident that 7,000,000 who voted Democratic, and 3,000,000 who voted Republican, in 1932, stayed away from the polls entirely in 1934. Millions of voters could see nothing in either party to justify the effort of walking to the ballot box. And some enthusiasm in the elections could only be found (aside from the followers of the still small Communist Party) only where the voters thought they could see something "more radical" than Roosevelt. That is the meaning of Sinclair and his E.P.I.C. program in California; of LaFollette and the "Progressive" Party in Wisconsin; of the Farmer-Labor Party victory in Minnesota in spite of the vicious record of Olson; and even of that half-fascist demagogue, Huey Long in Louisiana, with his moratorium and similar measures. Dozens of similar though smaller examples could be cited. The strikes of marine and textile workers, the Toledo, Milwaukee and Minneapolis strikes, and above all the great San Francisco General Strike, point the same road.

Millions of toilers are beginning to look for a new path. They are taking the first steps to break away from the old two-party system, which denies unemployment insurance and every other measure in the interests of the toiling majority of the people. A

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mass break-away from the old parties is in preparation. It is this great movement of strikes and demonstrations, and the break-away movement from the old parties, which give promise of forcing the adoption of the Workers' Bill.

This great mass movement is still confused and ineffective. It has not yet found itself. It will have to go through many bitter disappointments and disillusionments before it finds the right way. It will have to see how the Progressive Party of LaFollette clings in practice to the Roosevelt apron-strings, and uses its "radicalism" to catch votes, but not even to write laws.

It will see its Farmer-Labor Congressmen voting with the Democrats against their demands, and its Olsons calling out the National Guard against strikers. It will learn that it must find a program and a leadership which frankly and openly comes out in struggle against the big capitalists, who own 90 per cent of the country, in the interests of the toiling masses, the 90 per cent of the people, who do all the work. It will find that it must become an anti-capitalist party, a Labor Party.

Just imagine what a different situation in Congress we would have on Capitol Hill, if the millions of workers had been organized to vote for their best strike leaders, the unemployed to vote for the builders of the Unemployment Councils, the farmers to vote for those who led their picket lines and "Sears-Roebuck penny sales", the Negroes to vote for those who lead the fight against lynching and jim-crowism and for freedom of the Scottsboro boys. Just imagine in the United States Congress a strong group of these leaders of the masses, supported by a mass movement, and imagine how much more quickly we could force Congress to enact the Workers' Bill into law. How different such a Congress would be from this one, composed entirely of lawyers, bankers, and the hired men of Wall Street!

Every honest fighter for the Workers' Bill must realize that precisely this is the only sure road, the road of mass struggle supporting parliamentary action, to the enactment of real unemployment insurance.

The Communist Party is a Party of Labor, of all those who toil. And it is not an ineffective party. In comparison to its membership and vote, it is the most effective party that ever existed in the United States. A vote for the Communist Party registers deeply; just think, for example, how much easier it would be to "persuade" even the present Congress to adopt the Workers' Bill tomorrow, if they had been frightened to death by the ghost of a few million Communist votes last November, and by a greater mass strike movement, by greater street demonstrations, by growing mass organizations.

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But the Communist Party is a particular kind of a Labor Party. Our program goes far beyond unemployment insurance, which, after all, is only an emergency measure. We propose a revolutionary solution of the crisis of capitalism, by abolishing the whole rotten capitalist system, by setting up in its place a socialist system which would put everyone to work, not at the New Deal slave-labor, but with the most modern machinery, producing the goods we all need for our own use, but not for capitalist profits. We propose to travel the same road already shown by the glorious victories of the Russian working class which is rapidly expanding the socialist system. It is unfortunately true that the millions now preparing to break away from the old parties are not yet prepared to go the whole way now with the Communist program.

We Communists are often accused of being "unrealistic" and "sectarian", because we bring forward such a far-reaching revolutionary program. But we are convinced that our program is the only realistic one, the only program which can solve the problems now vexing humanity. We are sure that all of you, all the broad masses, will be convinced in the not distant future, by experience. We do not propose to "make a revolution" by ourselves, as the fantastic lies of the Dickstein Committee and Hearst tell you, not by absurd conspiracies, not by "kidnapping the President", not by bombs and individual terror, all of which we denounce as police provocations, but only with the majority of the toilers, by mass action, when they have been convinced of the Communist program.

And we do not sit idly waiting until the masses are convinced of our program. We Communists work and fight together with all of you, among the broad masses, for all these partial demands, for the daily life-needs of the masses which are already understood. It is not an accident, for example, that it was left for us, the Communists, to formulate the Workers' Bill, which is the center of the great mass movement represented in this Congress.

So, also, when it comes to the mass breakaway from the old parties, which will play such a great part in finally forcing the adoption of the Workers' Bill. We would welcome these masses at once into the Communist Party. But we are realists. We know that for a time they will stop short of the full Communist program. We do not separate ourselves from this mass movement for that reason. We encourage and help the movement in every way. We call upon all of you to do the same thing. We propose that all of us get together in a great effort for unity, unity in struggle for immediate demands against the capitalists, unity upon the broad basis of the class of those who labor against those who exploit our labor, unity on the basis of every-day needs, unity of the poor against the rich, of the producers against the parasites.

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We Communists are prepared to join hands, with all our force, all our energy, all our fighting capacity, with all who are ready to fight against Wall Street, against monopoly capital, in the formation of a broad mass party to carry on this fight, into a fighting Labor Party based upon the trade unions, the Unemployment Councils, the farmers' organizations, all the mass organizations of toilers, with a program of demands and of mass actions to improve the conditions of the masses at the expense of the rich, for measures such as the Farmers' Emergency Relief Bill, the Negro Rights Bill, and the Workers' Unemployment and Social Insurance Bill.

WORKING CLASS UNITY CAN WIN

The Congress on Capitol Hill, to which you will tomorrow present the Workers' Bill, is packed against us. It is composed of the paid agents of the bankers and monopolists, of Wall Street, and the parties controlled by them. You cannot convince them by arguments. You can change their votes only by threatening their power, by more unity, more organization, more *powerful* organization of the workers. The mass movement in support of the Workers' Bill is potentially such a threat. We must, from this Congress, go out to the country to rally millions for the necessary next step—to build a great, broad, united front of Labor, economically and politically, which will begin to take up the question of State Power, of control of the government, which will begin to fight to end the power of Wall Street, to realize the political power of Labor—which will launch the struggle that, though it begins with the Workers' Bill for Unemployment and Social Insurance, can end only with a complete Workers' Society, that will abolish forever even the terrible memory of hunger, misery, and unemployment.

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Lenin on Unemployment and Social Insurance

(*Resolution of the Prague Conference of the Bolshevik Party, January*, 1912.)

"On the Attitude to the Proposed Legislation of the Duma on Government Insurance for Workers." (Translated from the Russian, Lenin's *Works*, Vol. XV, p. 385.)

I.

1. That part of the wealth created by the worker which he receives in the form of wages is so insignificant that it hardly suffices to satisfy the most urgent and elementary needs for subsistence. The worker is thus denied the possibility of putting by any savings out of his wages to serve him in case of disability resulting from injury, sickness, old age, invalidity, and also in case of unemployment, which is so closely tied up with the capitalist mode of production. Therefore, the insurance of workers against all the above-mentioned conditions is a reform which is forcefully dictated by the entire process of capitalist development.

2. The best form of insurance for workers is governmental insurance, based on the following conditions: (a) It must secure for the workers in all cases of disability (injury, illness, old age, invalidity), in the case of women workers, also pregnancy and childbirth; the pensioning of widows and orphans after the death of the breadwinner; or in case of loss of work due to unemployment; (b) The insurance must include all wage workers and their families; (c) All insured must receive compensation equivalent to full wages, and the cost of insurance is to be covered by the employer and the government; (d) All forms of insurance are to be controlled by a single insurance organization built on a territorial basis, based upon the complete self-administration of the insured themselves.

3. The government insurance project adopted by the government Duma radically contradicts all the basic requirements of a rationally organized insurance. This insurance applies to: (a) only two types of insurance—insurance against accident and illness; (b) it embraces only a small part—(according to the most liberal calculations) one-sixth—of the Russian proletariat and it leaves out entirely sections of the country (Siberia, the Caucasus) as well as many categories of workers who are especially in need of insurance (agricul-

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tural workers, building workers, railroad, postal and telegraph workers, salesmen, etc.); (c) the compensation is equivalent to the paupers' dole (the national compensation in case of complete injury, two-thirds of the wages, and this is calculated on a basis lower than the real wages).

At the same time it places the greater part of the cost of insurance on the shoulders of the workers: the workers have to pay for insurance not only in cases of illness but also in cases of "small" injuries which in practice are the most frequent ones. This new ruling is even worse than the law hitherto in force which places the responsibility for compensation in case of injury exclusively upon the employer; (d) the insurance institutions are deprived of their independence and are placed under the control and supervision of officers, gendarmes, police (who, in addition to the general supervision, are given the right to direct the activities of the institution, to influence the personnel, etc.), bosses (primarily entrepreneurs, companies carrying accident insurance, the factory type of sick benefit funds which insure in case of sickness, etc.).

4. Only a law that in the crudest manner disregards the most urgent interests of the workers could be brought forth at the present moment of insane reaction in a period of the rule of counter-revolution as a result of years of preliminary parleys and agreements between the government and representatives of capital. A necessary condition for the realization of an insurance reform which would actually answer the interests of the proletariat is the complete destruction of Tsarism and the gaining of conditions for the free development of the class struggle of the proletariat.

II.

From the above, the conference comes to the following conclusions:

1. The immediate task of illegal Party organizations as well as comrades working in legal organizations (trade unions, workers' clubs, cooperatives, etc.) is the development of the widest agitation against the insurance project of the Duma which affects the interests of the entire Russian proletariat as a class and which in the crudest form violates the interests of the proletariat.

2. The conference considers it necessary to emphasize that the entire Social-Democratic [read now *Communist—Ed.*] agitation with regard to the proposed insurance legislation must be linked up with the class conditions of the proletariat in the present capitalist society, with the criticism of bourgeois illusions spread by the social-reformists and generally with our basic socialist tasks. On the other hand, in this agitation the character of the Duma "reform" must be linked

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up with the political moment which we are living through at present and generally with our revolutionary democratic tasks and slogans.

3. Approving entirely the voting of the Social-Democratic fraction in the Duma against the proposed legislation, the conference calls the attention of the comrades to that enormous and valuable material which the debates in the Duma supplied on this question in order to clarify the attitude of the various classes to labor reforms; the conference especially stresses the tendencies hostile to the workers expressed in the debate by the Octobrists, representatives of backward capital, and also the disguised position of the representatives of the Cadet Party covered up with social-reformist phrases about "social peace"; the Cadets in the Duma in essence express themselves against independent action of the working class and with hatred voted against the basic amendments to the insurance project proposed by the Social-Democratic fraction in the Duma.

4. The conference in a most decisive manner warns the workers against any attempt to distort the Social-Democratic agitation, against any attempt to limit it within the framework of legalistic possibilities in a period of the rule of counter-revolution; on the contrary, the conference emphasizes that the basic point in our agitation should be the clarification for the broad masses of the proletariat of the truth—that without a new revolutionary upsurge, no real improvement in the conditions of the workers is possible; that everyone who wants to secure a real labor reform must fight first of all for a new victorious revolution.

5. In case the proposed legislation in the Duma, despite the protest of the class-conscious proletariat, will become a reality, the conference calls upon the comrades to utilize the new organizational forms which will be established by the project (the sick benefit funds of the workers) for the purpose of carrying on in these organizational nuclei, energetic propaganda for Social-Democratic ideas and thus to transform the law created for the further enslavement and oppression of the proletariat into a weapon for the development of its class consciousness, for strengthening its discipline, for strengthening its struggle, for complete political freedom and socialism.

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The United Front in the Field of Negro Work

By JAMES W. FORD

ALL events during three and a half years confirm our analysis of the course of the Scottsboro case. Recent victories and developments in the cases of Heywood Patterson and Clarence Norris, however, make it necessary at this time to re-examine the position of the Scottsboro case in order to prepare to forge ahead with a broader united front of action.

The revolutionary policies have gained a number of victories in the Scottsboro case, but the Negro reformist leaders say that these victories cannot continue unless the International Labor Defense withdraws and a tactic more pleasing to the white rulers is substituted for mass pressure.

The results achieved so far, through raising the struggle against the system which makes Scottsboros possible, have completely justified the use of the tactic. The usual procedure is to lynch the victim on his arrest or to break into the jail after he has been imprisoned and carry him out to torture and death. But with Scottsboro this has not happened.

Despite bitter opposition, Negro reformist leaders have in some cases been forced to go along with the I.L.D. defense. Joint action of various Negro organizations and individuals became more frequent as the case developed. The attacks of certain sections of the Negro press slightly changed; among others they increased.

One thing has stood out before the masses, however. They saw that although in some cases the reformist leaders took part in the struggle, their policy was to give in to the white rulers, while the Communists and revolutionary workers were fighting every step against the ruling class for the interests of the boys.

With the attacks of the ruling class against the Negro people becoming more vicious, as in the case of the Claude Neal lynching, etc., broader sections of the workers and middle class are convinced that the talk of preachers and Negro reformist leaders that we must go quietly because Roosevelt will tackle lynching is lying talk. Despite the great activity of the administration against "crime", the crusade against the kidnappers of the rich and the convening of a so-called Crime Conference at Washington, D. C., lynching increases in

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barbarity and Roosevelt raises no hand against it. He mentions lynching only very casually in his speech to the conference.

Moreover, only those who are blind can fail to see that Roosevelt's policy is one of growing attacks against working class organizations. These fascist tendencies emanate not only directly from the administration but express themselves in the activities of the Dickstein Committee for the so-called "Investigation of Un-American Activities", and in the Hearst press. They are designed to deprive workers of civil rights.

Because of this tendency in the country today, more and more workers and Negro people are being convinced that united action is the question of the moment. And since the Negro reformist leaders, supported by the white leaders of the American Federation of Labor, etc., can no longer fool the masses so easily as before, the Communist Party and the revolutionary organizations have a greater opportunity for winning wider masses for united action.

The Scottsboro case opened a great path of struggle for Negro liberation in the United States. From the very beginning we recognized that acts of persecution, the denial of civil rights, ostracism, jim-crowism, and degradation of the Negro people were factors involved in the Scottsboro case; and that upon such acts of oppression, economic remnants of slavery and national oppression, it would be possible to arouse the Negro people and hundreds of thousands of sympathizers in support of the Scottsboro defense.

Over two years ago Comrade Harry Heywood clearly set forth this position:

> "Scottsboro is but the expression of the whole system of national oppression of the Negro people—a system which in this country of 'enlightened' capitalist democracy holds in shameless suppression a nation of 12,000,000 human beings, subjects them to super-exploitation on the plantations and in the factories, through a system of segregation and Jim-Crowism denies them even the most elementary political rights and relegates them to a position of social pariahs."

The accuracy of Comrade Heywood's estimate has been proved by the response of millions of sympathizers to the support of this case.

At the Eighth Convention of the Communist Party, held at Cleveland, in April, 1934, Earl Browder, General Secretary of the Communist Party, further emphasized the meaning of Scottsboro:

> "How impossible it would have been to rouse the Negro masses in the United States in millions to the support of the Scottsboro boys; how impossible to have joined with them millions of white toilers and middle classes; how impossible to have stirred the entire world,

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> as was done—if the Scottsboro case had been taken up from the liberal-humanitarian point of view, or if it had been approached from the narrow Social-Democratic viewpoint! The Scottsboro case stirred America to its depths, not merely because nine friendless Negro boys were threatened with an unjust death, but because their cause was brought forward clearly as a symbol of the national oppression of twelve million Negroes in America, because the fight for their freedom was made the symbol for the fight of the Negro farmers for their land, of the fight for the self-determination in the Black Belt, of the fight against lynchings, against Jim-Crowism, against the smallest discriminations, for unconditional social and political equality for the Negroes."

Comrade Browder blasts the charge of the enemies that the Communist Party uses the Scottsboro case to trick Negroes to the Party, by showing that the Communist Party has brought forward the Scottsboro case as a part of the struggle for Negro liberation.

THE PRESENT STATUS OF THE CASE

On November 16, 1934, a stay of execution was granted Heywood Patterson and Clarence Norris by the Alabama Supreme Court. On January 7, 1935, the United States Supreme Court handed down a decision to hear the appeal. Again powerful mass protest initiated by the Communist Party and the International Labor Defense, supported by new sections of workers and Negro people has demonstrated the value of mass defense and working-class watchfulness. The stay of execution was automatically extended.

Overcoming many difficulties, the I.L.D. succeeded in filing application for a writ of certioriari, for the review of the cases. The cases will be argued by Messrs. Osmond K. Fraenkel and Walter Pollak, I.L.D. lawyers, and others, on fundamental Constitutional points involving the age-old policy of exclusion of Negroes from jury service, and the attempt to deprive Patterson of the right to appeal.

The State of Alabama, through the State prosecutor, Attorney-General Thomas E. Knight, Jr., has filed an answer to the charges in the writ of the I.L.D., denying that Negroes are excluded from jury service, a charge that has been unquestionably proved at all the trials of the boys, and which the prosecution, assisted by Judge Callahan, tried to remove at the last Decatur trial by forging the names of Negroes on the jury roll. The prosecution also claims that the U.S. Supreme Court has no jurisdiction in the case.

The International Labor Defense arose a score of years ago as an organization to defend working class political prisoners, and to fight for the civil rights of workers and the oppressed masses. It aimed to bring together the loose defense committees into a perma-

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nent centralized mass defense organization, employing legal methods supported by mass action. It understood the nature of corrupt courts and judges and the vicious system of capitalist justice. It does not depend on the humanitarianism of white capitalist judges and it is not afraid to outrage the feelings of these judges. It knew that hundreds of thousands of Negro and white people had to be aroused.

We have not been disappointed. Knowing the power of the enemy and that it would use every trick, every form of violence against the defense, the I.L.D. realized that only if millions could be aroused could this most outrageous case in the history of the Negro people be won.

Therefore, from a legal viewpoint, the I.L.D. had to rely upon lawyers who were able in various phases of legal defense and willing to follow the policy of the I.L.D. It is not easy to find lawyers who combine these qualities with honesty. However, there are honest and upright lawyers willing to sacrifice for the cause of the working class and the oppressed masses. The men who took part in achieving the great victory in the Dimitroff-Reichstag fire case show this. Among them was Leo Gallagher. There are also men like Joseph Brodsky whose real worth in the cause of the working class and the Scottsboro boys is not fully appreciated. We have with us now in the Scottsboro defense honorable legal representatives like Fraenkel and Pollak, who are able in their profession particularly as expert Constitutional lawyers, as their work in the Scottsboro case so far has shown. The I.L.D. may not always succeed in getting lawyers who see eye to eye with it on every question of policy; nevertheless, it is compelled to use lawyers who will agree on a minimum program.

THE NEGRO REFORMISTS

Now let us speak of Dr. George E. Haynes, who has grouped around him certain Harlem Negro ministers and others. Many of these ministers, and particularly Rev. L. H. King of St. Mark's Church, Harlem, have heretofore rendered no aid to the Scottsboro boys. They hope now by helping to break the mass defense of the case that it will be possible to regain the favor of their white friends which they have lost with their growing inability to hold back the Negro masses. Their policy is one of compromise with the white rulers on the life and freedom of the boys as was done in the Crawford case.

One would think that these men as Negroes, affected by the system of national oppression, would not consciously play the role of betrayers of the Negro masses. But we must understand that we cannot group men together without differentiating them. As there is an exploited working class, and a ruling class in "humanity", so

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there are divisions among the Negro people. Certain groups of Negroes, having relationships with the ruling class, of necessity support the white rulers against the interests of their people. We have always pointed out this division. Two years ago we exposed the role of the *Pittsburgh Courier*, a Negro paper edited by Robert L. Vann, also assistant attorney-general in the Roosevelt administration, which stated in its columns:

> "It is likely, however, that if mobs break out in Alabama and these eight boys taken from the chair and lynched, it would probably be due to the nonsensical activities of the Communists, who by their misguided energies are finally driving the citizens of Alabama to the point of desperation."

It is clear to us now, for example, who "drove the citizens to desperation" at Marianna, Florida, in the lynching of Claude Neal; it was the State officials of Alabama and of Florida, of the Democratic Party of which Robert Vann is a member. He did not raise one finger to use the office which he occupies, that office which has been bending its energies to track down the kidnappers of the rich, to enforce the Lindbergh Law against the kidnappers of Claude Neal. Nor did President Roosevelt, the leader of the party, take any steps to bring about justice. Robert L. Vann, George E. Haynes and the Negro ministers of his group illustrate in the most glaring form the united front of the reactionary Negro leaders with the white ruling class lynchers of the Negro people.

William Pickens, field organizer of the N.A.A.C.P., who warned the Southern capitalists in a speech at Chattanooga on the eve of the battle at Camp Hill, said:

> "Let the white people of Alabama sit up and take notice: This Communism sapping through the densely ignorant portion of the colored population, while not immediately menacing to government itself, is certainly menacing good race relations."

The despicable treachery of the Negro reformists (such as George E. Haynes, etc.) in their cringing servility to the white ruling class is not accidental. It is the role played by reactionary elements among the Negroes because of their relationship to the white rulers on whom they depend for their livelihood and because of their ignorance of social changes.

Harry Haywood said, in his pamphlet *The Road to Negro Liberation*, that such people base their policy on the theory that "the Negro question can be solved within the confines of the present capitalist imperialist social order . . . that the fate of the Negro masses is bound up with the maintenance of capitalism" that is, that the Negro people should not struggle against lynching, oppression,

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Jim-Crowism, etc., but wait, as though freedom is handed down from above as a reward for weak-kneed crawling. Their aim, therefore, is to prevent the rising movement and struggle of the Negro masses for liberation.

These Negro ministers of Harlem, and William N. Davis of the *Amsterdam News*, visited the boys in prison and there tried to throw the fear of God into the boys with threats and deception. They told the boys that if they remained with the I.L.D. they would surely die, whereas if they withdrew from the I.L.D. they would get life imprisonment. Such pressure was certain to have an effect on youngsters who had been imprisoned for over three years. Only seasoned fighters like Angelo Herndon could have withstood this united attack of Southern lynchers and the Negro ministers.

Dr. George E. Haynes organized the American Scottsboro Committee with the purpose of conducting the defense on "American" principles. There is no doubt that some sincere people, Negro and white, were caught up in the net of George E. Haynes' American Committee. This committee, however, has no other aim than to break down the necessary unity for the defense. The disruptive tactics of George E. Haynes can be seen by the numerous tricks and slanders coming from him and Liebowitz as publicized in the *Amsterdam News*.

Such tricks and slanders as that the I.L.D. was misusing funds; that it had been negligent in filing the appeals, thus endangering the lives of the boys; that Liebowitz had been recognized as attorney for the boys by the Supreme Court of the United States; the *Amsterdam News* printed fake telegrams stating that the stay of execution would be withdrawn by the I.L.D. if the boys did not stay with them; the wife of a Harlem Negro policeman impersonated Mrs. Patterson without her consent in a fake radio broadcast.

The crowning piece of provocation was the statement of George E. Haynes, reprinted in the December 4 issue of the *New Masses*, that "If the boys stuck with the I.L.D. the American Scottsboro Committee would wash their hands of them and let them *take their medicine*." (Emphasis mine—J.W.F.)

The I.L.D. well understands its responsibility to the masses who contribute funds. It has been able, through an excellent summary of the disposal of all funds during three and a half years, to blast the slander about the misuse of funds.

It is well known that the I.L.D. relies mainly on developing mass campaigns to supplement the court action. Nevertheless, the financial statement of the I.L.D. for three and a half years shows that the biggest item of the $61,825 collected, $38,181, or 62 per cent, went for legal and court investigations.

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For mass campaigns which have been developed throughout the world, including a march of 5,000 people to Washington, D. C., $7,670, or only 12 per cent was spent. Overhead expense was 24 per cent as compared to 71 per cent in other organizations such as the American Red Cross.

To the charge of negligence in filing appeals of the case in the Alabama courts, it must be pointed out that Liebowitz was associated with the case at the time of the appeal and therefore would share the responsibility of any such errors. But no such errors were really made. This was the result of a legal trick by Judge Callahan. According to Alabama law a motion for a new trial must be filed with the trial judge and if this is denied a bill of exceptions must be filed in the State Supreme Court. The court stenographer repeatedly failed to deliver the necessary papers for the appeal and the I.L.D. lawyers asked for extension of the time set for filing the new trial motion before Judge Callahan. This was granted by the judge himself. Then when the appeal came up, he ruled it void on the ground that he had no right to make the extension *which he himself had granted!* This bit of trickery cut down the amount of time in which to appeal to the Alabama Supreme Court from three months to *ten days!* Nevertheless the almost superhuman feat was accomplished of preparing and printing the necessary papers, more than 15,000 pages long, in time.

Again and again we have said: "It is necessary to establish at once the broadest united front of all elements among the Negro and white people ready to fight for the freedom of the Scottsboro boys. We must carry the struggle outside the narrow periphery of the I.L.D. and the mass revolutionary trade unions, greatly widening its organizational base to include even the most backward masses of toilers."

Proposals have been made by the Communist Party to nearly all organizations that declare themselves to be interested in the Scottsboro Boys. On March 30, 1933, we made proposals to the Socialist Party, the Conference for Progressive Labor Action (Muste), and the American Federation of Labor for united action on several specific issues. Prominent among them was the Scottsboro case as follows:

> "3. For the workers' rights, for the release of Tom Mooney, for the Scottsboro boys, and all political prisoners; against terror. . . ."

This proposal made a deep impression on many rank-and-file Socialists. Nevertheless, the leadership took no action for the united front. A rank-and-file delegate of the Morningside branch of the

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Socialist Party in New York stated at the Scottsboro-Herndon Conference that he had fought for his local taking action in the Scottsboro defense. But all proposals made in his branch were tabled.

In order to broaden further the united front, the I.L.D. took the initiative in calling a conference in October, 1934, to set up an independent committee of Negro people and sympathetic white workers, liberals, and intellectuals. This conference, held in Harlem, was attended by 242 delegates representing 190,000 people. Some of the most sincere and active among the Negro people took part in this conference. Representatives like William N. Jones of the *Afro-American*, Aaron Douglass, a noted Negro artist, Eugene Gordon, the well-known Negro writer and newspaperman, Dr. Reuben Young and many others. There were also many working class leaders, rank-and-file trade unionists and liberals.

The conference elected an executive committee and set about to unify the struggle and swing large masses of people to militant support of the Scottsboro boys. It had to work in the face of the difficulties enumerated above.

A great mass demonstration was organized in Harlem. Contacts were made with Negro organizations. Scottsboro-Herndon Action Committees were set up in the boroughs around New York and in other cities of the country. A large delegation went to see Roosevelt before his departure from Washington for the Thanksgiving holidays. It was composed of representatives from Eastern cities, two of the Scottsboro mothers, Dr. Broadus Mitchell, Socialist candidate for governor in the state of Maryland, Mrs. Speed, of a well known white family of Alabama, and many others.

Following his usual policy of contempt for the Negro people, and the Scottsboro boys, Roosevelt refused to see the delegation. His secretary, Marvin McIntyre, flatly stated that we would never see the President. But the committee was not daunted. It immediately sent a representative to meet Roosevelt at Fisk University, where he was scheduled to stop in the course of his trip to visit the Norris Dam, to listen to the singing of spirituals by the students of this Negro university at Nashville, Tennessee.

James W. Ford, a member of the National Scottsboro-Herndon Committee and a former student of Fisk University was sent to Nashville. At a meeting with the student council he convinced them of the importance of handing Roosevelt a letter of protest signed by 250 students. Because of the sentiment aroused by Ford's activities, the students later sent a delegation from Nashville to Warm Springs, Georgia, to see Roosevelt.

The National Baptist Voice, a Southern Negro church paper, reported as follows on Ford's visit to Nashville:

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> "The presence of James Ford, Communist leader, made some of us nervous. Now, we Southern 'handkerchief heads' know how to put on a show, a good show for big white people. We know how to look satisfied and contented even though our souls are burning inside.
>
> "This writer expected Ford to rise unceremoniously and remind the President that less than one hundred yards away a boy was lynched and nothing done about it.
>
> "As the Presidential car pulled away, James Ford jumped from his seat, unfurled a banner with this inscription: 'Do something for the Scottsboro Boys!'
>
> "As the writer looked over that large group of people he saw doctors of philosophy, research scholars, scientists, writers, poets, executives, etc., etc.,"

The National Scottsboro-Herndon Action Committee has been able in a short time to arouse masses in support of the Scottsboro boys, in fulfilling its role as a united front body. One sentence from the above quotation shows how wide the possibilities are: "We know how to look satisfied and contented though *our souls are burning inside.*" (Emphasis mine—J.W.F.)

Through these activities, despite the contempt of Roosevelt, the Scottsboro-Herndon Committee gained signal victories.—The Alabama Supreme Court was forced to grant a stay of execution, and the United States Supreme Court has decided to hear the appeal.

On November 26, 1934, the Scottsboro-Herndon Action Committee sent a letter to the American Scottsboro Committee pointing out the urgency of united action. It stated in part:

> "To achieve unity we propose that a conference be arranged during the week of November 28 at which representatives of the American Scottsboro Committee will meet with representatives of the National Scottsboro-Herndon Action Committee to discuss how steps can be taken to present a solid front in the fight for the unconditional freedom of the Scottsboro Boys."

This letter was signed by Samuel Patterson, secretary. On December 1, a reply was received from the American Scottsboro Committee signed by Dr. George E. Haynes and Rev. L. H. King, stating: "Our committee does not see the way clear for a conference at this time."

The National Scottsboro-Herndon Action Committee tried to make the way clear. It sent another letter to the American Scottsboro Committee on December 21, stating:

> "Most seriously, we must state, that if ever there was a time when united action is imperative on the part of all true friends of the Scottsboro boys, of all who sincerely wish to win their freedom to achieve justice in this momentous case which involves the rights, lives, and liberties of the twelve million bitterly oppressed Negro

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people and of all the masses of the people, white as well as black—*that time is now!*"

To this appeal there has not been as yet a reply.

The following letter was sent to all organizations represented at the conference on Civil Liberties Under the New Deal, organized by the American Civil Liberties Union on December 8-9, 1934, at Washington, D. C.:

"It was with a great deal of interest that we read of the steps taken by the Conference on Civil Liberties Under the New Deal, in which your organization was represented, went on record to 'endorse and support the legal and mass defense of the International Labor Defense in the Scottsboro Case. . . .

"The action taken by the Washington Conference is an indication that those who were present there are fully aware of the present crucial stage of the Scottsboro Case. . . .

"We ask you to help us by joining the Committee, and drawing in the entire weight of your organization behind the campaign to win the unconditional freedom of the Scottsboro Boys. We would like a representative to the Committee and ask you to inform us as soon as possible as to what steps your organization finds it possible to take."

This letter was sent to the following organizations: American Civil Liberties Union, American Federation of Teachers, American Indian Defense Association, Church League for Industrial Democracy, Committee for Protection of Foreign Born, Committee on Militarism in Education, Emergency Committee for Strikers Relief, Farmers National Committee for Action, Fellowship of Reconciliation, General Defense Committee, International Juridical Association, League for Industrial Democracy, Methodist Federation for Social Service, National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, National League for American Citizenship, National Committee on Federal Legislation for Birth Control, National Student Federation, National Urban League, People's Lobby, United Farmers League and the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom.

On November 22, the I.L.D. received the following letter from Roger Baldwin, secretary of the American Civil Liberties Union:

". . . Although some of the boys have changed their minds several times it appears now that the cases on appeal to the U. S. Supreme Court are legally in the hands of Walter Pollak and Osmond K. Fraenkel, attorneys selected by the International Labor Defense. We regard these men as wholly competent to handle the proceedings. Mr. Pollak argued the case previously in the U. S. Supreme Court. We urge our friends to contribute to the legal defense fund to be used solely for retaining these lawyers and for the heavy incidental expenses of printing the record and brief."

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The National Scottsboro-Herndon Action Committee, on December 21, sent the following appeal to the Civil Liberties Union:

> "1. That a representative of the A.C.L.U. join this Committee—the National Scottsboro-Herndon Action Committee.
> "2. That the A.C.L.U. assist us in securing the participation in the work of this committee of those organizations who attended the Washington Conference and voted to endorse the Scottsboro Defense of the I.L.D."

The American Civil Liberties Union replied that it would be "glad to cooperate with the National Scottsboro-Herndon Action Committee, but cannot send representatives to join the Committee. We prefer to have our action taken on specific issues as they come up rather than identify ourselves with a joint committee."

The International Labor Defense and the Scottsboro-Herndon Action Committee, in view of the urgency for unity which should not be hindered with long negotiations, is bending every efforts to broaden the united front. The Communist Party urges all workers—Communists, Socialists, trade union members, Negro people and sympathizers to enter the fight for the lives of the Scottsboro boys, to push forward the united front proposals in these organizations.

NEXT STEPS IN THE UNITED FRONT

That we have worked for united action in the Scottsboro case is clear to the world and that now the Negro organizations and the broad masses are ready for united action is also clear.

There is no question about the outcome of our united front activities among Negro organizations, providing the Communists and the advanced Negro workers and intellectuals undertake their work seriously.

The masses have shown their approval of our methods by mass demonstrations in Harlem and throughout the country, by the response of Negro students in the South, by the pressure which forced John W. Davis and Mitchel temporarily to turn their backs on Liebowitz. Pressure of the masses forced *The Nation* magazine to repudiate the charges of misuse of funds brought against the I.L.D. Scottsboro-Herndon Action Committees have been built up in many parts of the country. Various organizations have asked the Scottsboro Mothers and Angelo Herndon to speak before their membership, such as the Elks, etc., and finally they have shown their support through mass actions attacking discrimination, such as a united front of over sixty organizations in Queens against discrimination against Negro doctors in hospitals and the united front in Harlem against discrimination on jobs and in relief administration

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as well as the struggle in Chicago around the case of Herbert Newton and mass actions on January 8 for Scottsboro.

There are thousands of organizations among Negroes, such as fraternal organizations, lodges, social clubs, West Indian organizations, independent trade unions, locals of the A. F. of L., youth and Greek Letter societies, churches and affiliated social groups. They can be approached with the conception of Scottsboro as a symbol of national oppression and for national liberation. We must not come to these organizations with their varying programs with the idea of destroying them but with the idea of bringing them nearer to the program of the League of Struggle for Negro Rights. Whatever the character of the organization, we can by correct appeal orientate a phase of it to Scottsboro and the L.S.N.R. liberation program.

The manner of exposing the leaders who oppose the united front must be carefully considered. Our line on the petty-bourgeois nationalists is now clear; Comrade Heywood has analyzed the position of the various strata of Negro reformists. We must weigh each individual leader and his particular type of betrayal and expose him by concrete argument which will be understandable and convincing to the rank and file.

In this article we have tried to do this in the case of George E. Haynes. He belongs to that group of Negro reformists who have been promoted in one way or another by the Roosevelt "Black Cabinet" such as Robert L. Vann, Eugene Kinckle Jones, Daniel Roper, Henry Hunt, Forrester B. Washington, etc., in order to gain support for the administration.

Haynes is also a member of the Board of Trustees of Fisk University and is in close connection with Paul Caravath White, another member of the Board, who is a Wall Street banker and close to J. P. Morgan. No doubt, as the son of a former president of Fisk, he renders service to the school in the investment field. George E. Haynes is of the old type of Negro conservative like Kelly Miller. Through his connection with the Federated Council of Churches he has influence in the leading bodies of church organizations, Y.M.C.A.'s, etc. He should not be grouped indiscriminately with other types of Negro reformism. He represents the most reactionary and conservative type.

A few words should be said about Frank R. Crosswaith, Negro leader of the Socialist Party. Crosswaith belongs to the Right Wing of the Socialist Party, although at the Detroit Convention he wavered between the Left and Right Wings. He was not re-elected to the lily-white Executive Committee. In the Socialist Party Crosswaith carries out the Right Wing's conciliatory policy towards the

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A. F. of L. bureaucracy. As organizer of the International Ladies Garment Workers' Union and right-hand man of David Dubinsky, he endorses the jim-crow practices of its leadership. He was principal organizer of the William Green meeting in Harlem on January 6.

Crosswaith's position on Scottsboro is that of the extreme Right Wing of the Socialist Party. In a debate during the election campaign Crosswaith stated that Scottsboro had no class significance, that the Communists played upon the misery of the wretched Scottsboro boys in order to make political propaganda. Another Socialist candidate, a Negro woman, said that, although running on the same ticket with Crosswaith, she disagreed with him when he accused the Communists of using Scottsboro as a racket. She thought it a disgrace to the Socialist Party that they had not supported the struggle for Scottsboro, and that the Communists should be congratulated for their stand. When I spoke, I pointed out that Crosswaith represented the conservative point of view of the Right Wing while Miss Lane felt the sincere sentiments of the rank and file for united struggle with the Communists on Scottsboro. Crosswaith in a rage tried to infer that Miss Lane was naive and stupid. The uproar in the audience indicated how completely Crosswaith had exposed himself as an enemy of the Scottsboro boys.

There are among the Negro Socialist leaders some emerging "Lefts". They play with "Left" phrases in order to fool the masses; nevertheless, they should be encouraged to support the united front. If there are leading Negro Socialists who supported the Detroit Declaration they should be contacted for the united front on Scottsboro.

CHURCH ORGANIZATIONS

The church represents a fertile field for work. As an institution it has solid contact with the Negro masses, forming a social as well as a religious center. Long before there were social clubs, meeting halls or fraternal halls the church served their purposes. Marriages, baptisms, funerals, drama, amusement, religion, all the features of Negro social activities were bound up in the church.

When we go among the masses of the church to win support for Scottsboro we do not go to raise the religious issue. Recently at an open forum on religion a Negro woman, member of a church, said during the discussion, "You know you Communists have been sent by God to do the work you are doing, but you don't know it". Should we argue with such a woman about this statement when we are trying to make a united front on Scottsboro? Of course not! It would be stupid. If this woman believes that her religion

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can play a revolutionary role to the extent of supporting us on Scottsboro, this gives us a starting point for building the united front on Scottsboro. If we get the united front on Scottsboro other things will take care of themselves if we act intelligently and know how to follow through.

At the September meeting of the Central Committee, while discussing the "Struggle for the United Front", Comrade Browder said,

> "Father Divine brought his followers into the August 4 demonstration of the American League Against War and Fascism; previous to that in the demonstration of National Youth Day, and the participation of this section with its fantastic slogans aroused grave doubts in the minds of many comrades as to whether it was not a serious mistake to allow these religious people to march in our parade with their slogans: 'Father Divine is God', 'Father Divine Will Stop War', etc.
>
> "This problem is perhaps an exaggerated example of the whole problem of reaching the backward masses and bringing them into participation with the most advanced section of the working class in revolutionary struggles."

Comrade Browder is absolutely correct. The Trotzkyites criticized our united front with Father Divine, and Crosswaith, the Socialist leader, declared, "Look whom the Communists make united fronts with—the illiterate, backward, crazy and fanatical people of Father Divine". We can answer these people with the arguments of Lenin. In answer to the criticism in 1905 that partisan warfare tended to demoralize the proletariat by bringing it into contact with backward undeveloped elements, Lenin said that it did, but "All forms of struggle in bourgeois society bring the proletariat nearer to various non-proletarian strata above and below it, and if left to themselves, to the spontaneous course of events, they are bound to get perverted, prostituted".

Here Lenin has illuminatingly shown the fundamental difference not only on the question of the united front, between ourselves and the Socialist leaders and the renegades from Communism, but the fundamental difference on Scottsboro, *the Negro question as a national question and the Negro people as an ally to the proletariat.* These people cannot understand this question; they do not want to.

We have had more experiences in Harlem with Father Divine and his followers. We have been among them, had the Scottsboro mothers speak before them. Indeed, Father Divine reacts to the pressure of the masses on Scottsboro more than these bureaucratic gentlemen.

I am reminded of a story told about a Red Army regiment of

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peasant soldiers in Russia during the counter-revolution. It is stated that the regiment was on the march. They came to a church and almost the entire troop stopped to make the sign of the cross before a statue of Christ with their rifles. Then they proceeded to meet the counter-revolutionary troops and won a magnificent victory over them for the preservation of Soviet Russia.

Within the Negro church organizations there are various social groups, study circles, auxiliary committees of five to fifty members. There are young peoples' circles, Epworth Leagues, Young Peoples Baptist Leagues, etc. It should be possible to make contact with the rank-and-file members and even the group leaders. These members can be approached on Scottsboro, but we must remember that they have pride in their church and that in many ways it meets their social and cultural desires.

We should not hesitate to expose the Ministers' Alliance. This body coordinates the activities of the various denominations. It is made up of the so-called big leaders and is bureaucratic in relation particularly to the smaller churches. This means that the little preachers are a strategic approach for us because they are close to the masses and because they hate the domination of the big ministers. The Ministers' Alliance represents the interests of the ruling class among the Negro people. In New York, for example, through the efforts of Dr. George E. Haynes, the Ministers' Alliance refused permission to the Scottsboro mothers to appear before the body. At one meeting Dr. Haynes threatened Mrs. Patterson in a highly angry manner, almost with violence, unless she agreed to give up the I.L.D.

We should also be able to expose certain preachers who use "Left" phrases to fool the masses. We can contrast their phrases and talk with their actions. Many of them promise to do everything possible for the Scottsboro boys, but when it comes to action they do nothing. We can defeat them by proposing concrete action they cannot sidestep, and thus expose their intentions.

Many elements in the lodges are sympathetic with the Scottsboro case. The Elks at their national conclave at Atlantic City in the past summer invited Angelo Herndon to speak. It is possible to build up support within these organizations among progressive men and women who will raise the question of Scottsboro in their lodges. In several secret order lodges in New York we have also organized study circles on the traditions of the Negro's struggles. In a Greek letter society there is being organized through our initiative a social problem group.

We should try to find these individuals through our friends and sympathizers, approach them in their homes, talk to them

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about Scottsboro, explaining with patience and care all the points they may raise. We should not overlook the possibilities for a united front among the honest secondary cadres and functionaries in these organizations by drawing them under our influence. We should try to get these organizations to send delegates to the Scottsboro-Herndon Action Committee in their locality and to build Scottsboro Committees in their organizations to give information regarding the case, to enlighten the membership and to raise funds.

I place the question that Party units in Negro communities should concentrate on a church, fraternal or other organization, and applying the principle of concentration given by the Open Letter these organizations become the "shop" in the territory of the unit.

The I.L.D. has as its main task to support the Scottsboro-Herndon Action Committees as united front centers, making paramount the struggle around issues of national liberation. What eventually will grow out of these committees will depend on how hard we work, and our success in making them into broad active bodies.

The L.S.N.R. should remain a propaganda center for the Negro liberation struggle. Branches of the L.S.N.R. should therefore affiliate with the Scottsboro Committees to serve as a guiding force, maintaining at the same time their independent existence. A more detailed examination of the role of the L.S.N.R. must be left for another article. The aim of the Communist Party is not to antagonize the members of these organizations or to raise extraneous questions for the moment; we do not aim to destroy their organizations but to develop and broaden the struggle for the release of these boys.

Therefore, when we are members of these organizations, we must be the best fighters against discrimination, etc., winning supporters to us. We must be informed on all angles of the Scottsboro case. We must be painstaking in our explanations of why and how our Party fights for Scottsboro. We must utilize our successes, and we have many, to show how gains can be made through struggle. We must be sensible and human in our contacts with these workers and be careful never to assume an attitude of superiority, as many of our comrades do. We must learn the rules of how meetings are conducted and be able to conduct ourselves in such a manner as to gain the respect and confidence of the members. If we do these things, we shall have no difficulty in presenting the issue of Scottsboro. We do not have to bring our whole program into the organization the first time.

The comrades in the trade unions, especially the A. F. of L. unions, must bring forward the question of Scottsboro because every act of discrimination, every policy against Negro labor, every

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act of suppression of the rights of labor organizations is a part of the oppression symbolized by the Scottsboro case.

In this day of struggle against war and fascism, for unemployment insurance, against wage reduction, for the destruction of capitalism, Negro labor is a powerful force within the working class as a whole. The struggles of the whole Negro people for liberation must be brought to the support of the struggle of working class against capitalism.

Properly brought forward, not by liberal-humanitarian methods, but as a support to the struggles of the working class, the correctness of our fight for Scottsboro can be shown to even the most backward worker. Similarly among liberal groups who still believe in democracy and civil rights, support will be gained when the fight for Scottsboro is presented as inseparably bound up with the rights of the Negro people and the struggle for the maintenance of civil rights. Scottsboro is bound up with the national liberation struggle for the right to self-determination of the Negro people and with the struggle of the entire American working class for the dictatorship of the proletariat—Soviet Power.

Now is the time, comrades, to build up the united front through Scottsboro-Herndon Action Committees and supporting the I.L.D. Conferences should be organized and well prepared throughout the country, the I.L.D. taking the initiative. The struggle for the Bill for Negro Rights and for the Suppression of Lynching should be undertaken with the greatest energy. Already in Cleveland the activity of the L.S.N.R. around discrimination against Mayor Wright in a local restaurant forced the passage of such a bill by the City Council.

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Unity of the Farming Masses — A Paramount Issue

By JOHN BARNETT

THE past two years witnessed a lull in the farmers' movement. While it is true that there have been numerous local struggles against sheriff sales and evictions, and for relief, no widespread movement comparable to the wave of protest and strikes of the 1932 period has developed. This question becomes especially important because we have just experienced the worst drought in our history. Why have so few drought struggles taken place? Was the ebb a sign that farmers are no longer being ruined? Has it been due to the objective conditions or to our own weaknesses?

Various objective factors must be taken into consideration. There is the Roosevelt New Deal demagogy which has taken many forms and has been combined with the actual distribution of relief and benefit payments by the government. These monies have been used in places where they would be most useful in quieting unrest, and at the same time in such forms as to be most easily scalped off by the bankers, creditors, and business men. For good reasons this relief is labeled "bankers' relief". The upper strata of the farmers, the only ones to receive any substantial benefit from the bonus payments, exercise much influence upon other sections of the rural population. A practice is made of giving special relief to militant leaders. Typical was the government's reaction to the drought. After keeping quiet just as long as possible, taking no steps to stop the devastation of the drought until spontaneous meetings and protests were taking place in the drought regions during the late spring, Roosevelt responded with the legislation for a half billion dollars to be used for C.C.C. camps, rehabilitation homes, cattle purchases, etc. The minimum amount of this money went to stop the ravages of the drought, in order to head off the developing unrest. Mainly the money went to help the affected creditors, bankers, and better-off farmers.

The flow of funds, just before the elections, into doubtful territories, and the especially liberal use of relief at that time, can hardly be accidental, as the New Dealers claimed. Since then these funds have been drastically cut down. Indeed, the administration now comes out with the proposal of work relief only, and a big subsis-

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tence homestead program is in the offing. In addition to this are the efforts to force the poor farmers, especially in the drought regions and the South, down to subsistence farming on their present farms.

Also the form of the attack against the small farmers has been changing. With the big wave of evictions and foreclosures (forced sales of farms during the five-year period ending March, 1933, amounted to over 1,000,000, or 16 per cent of all farms) went also the liquidation of the equity of many farmers who did not go through forced sale. Besides this, many lost their crops and equipment. Tremendous mass resistance developed. The cream of the spoils was beginning to be skimmed off. Much more of this direct expropriation is still in store, however. But during the past year or more the process has been rather one of "nibbling off" here and there, now and then, but steadily, after wearing the victim down. Here the governmental machinery has played a very important part.

The tactic of the A.A.A. is to catch the small farmers in its reduction net, strangling them with soft words about "higher prices", "voluntary control", etc., etc., in order to disrupt their unity and tangle up their resistance by all kinds of technicalities and maneuvers. The A.A.A. has built up a tremendous bureaucratic apparatus. By the various kinds of crop loans, etc., the government not only helps the farmer's creditors, but ties the farmers to its ruinous policies.

Furthermore, we must remember that the fundamental aim of the New Deal is to put the small farmers out of commercial production, to the benefit of their creditors, the big landowners and the banks. Under-Secretary Tugwell frankly stated (August 1933) that "something around two million persons who now farm will have to be absorbed by other occupations". Only recently Assistant Secretary Wilson made similar statements. This would leave the market more surely in the hands of the trusts and big farmers. These interests which benefit and stand to gain by the A.A.A. reduction program have a big influence and economic control among the small and middle farmers.

In addition, the developing Farmer-Labor and Progressive movements certainly exert a strong influence in directing the unrest of the farming masses into harmless channels. Nor can we afford to underestimate the influence exercised by the old-line and reformist organizations such as the Farmers Union, the Grange, and the Farm Bureau, the National Holiday Association, and hundreds of cooperatives controlled by trusts, political tools, and big farmers, in raising all kinds of illusionary programs for inflation, refinancing, the rubber dollar, tariff regulation, export schemes, legislative re-

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forms, and the like. National Holiday and Farmers Union leaders are resorting to extremely "Left" demagogy in contrast to the more conservative old-line leaders. During the 1932 upsurge the reformist leaders, who led most of the strike movements among the milk farmers, learned that such militant action was dangerous for them to play with. It is much safer for them to blow off with radical words than to be blown off their position by the masses in action. They now turn to more elaborate legislative programs to stave off militant movement.

But do these objective difficulties explain the lack of struggles? It is true, of course, that these conditions affect the moods and fighting spirit of the toiling masses of farmers, who are especially subject to illusions and liberal demagogy. True also, the wide offensive of the New Deal and reformists required special vigilance and alertness on our part. But even more true is the fact that five years of economic crisis on top of a decade of post-War agricultural crisis, the worst drought in history, and the attacks of finance capital and the A.A.A., put the farming masses in a desperate situation. Resentment against these conditions and the need for relief are deep and widespread. Certainly, we must say that the most serious reason for lack of wide upsurge lies in the weaknesses of the political and organizational leadership of the farmers' movement, and in the fact that the reformist barrage has not been adequately exposed and fought. The responsibility for this falls directly upon the Communists active in the farmers' movement, and on the Communist Party. To mobilize and turn this seething unrest from fascist tendencies into class struggle channels requires far better work on our part.

THE PARTY AND THE PROLETARIAN BASE

Our basic weakness in the countryside concerns the development of the Party. The rural units function, organizationally and politically, on a very low level. The Party organization in general, in the countryside, is disconnected from the district centers, lacking this most essential guidance, besides being detached from the work in the rural towns as well. Under such conditions how can work go forward correctly? This situation tends to develop a sort of agrarian party within, but alongside the Communist Party, subject to all sorts of confusion and opportunism. Until now we have had almost no discussion about what the unit loosely labeled "farm unit" is, what are its particular tasks, its role and its problems. This in itself shows the serious lack of a clear approach to the Party work in the country.

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A major task for us is to see that the agrarian work becomes a part of the Party work and that it receives guidance from the responsible Party bodies, from the C.C., and from the district and section committees. The agrarian comrades can do much by continually presenting their problems and demanding guidance from the districts.

Each comrade must take part in actively leading the work, in the struggles and in developing the best methods. Greater collective leadership in solving our problems, drawing in new forces and new comrades concerned with the various phases of work, and proper individual responsibility for carrying out our tasks, will help to bring immediate improvement.

A further reason for the weakness in the leadership of the farmers is the fact that in the areas where our movement is active, we have not accomplished the fundamental task of basing ourselves upon the rural proletariat. Our basing ourselves upon the rural proletariat plus the constant leadership of the city workers guided by the Communist Party are the only guarantees that the farmers' movement will be kept in class struggle channels. The task of organizing the farm hands and rural workers, of penetrating the small towns, is being started in a few places, but this basic task is still before us. Getting a foothold in the rural towns and linking up the farmers' movement with these workers, will do much to strengthen our work and clarify the class issues in the countryside.

The farmers' movement itself is not sufficiently based upon the poorest farmers. Certainly we expect to fight for the middle farmers, and want their support; but this gives added emphasis to the need for a firm basis among the small and poorest strata.

This question will not be solved, however, by taking a census or examining each farmer to see whether he is a small, middle, or capitalist farmer. It will be solved by raising the demands and fighting in the struggles of the hardest-pressed farmers; by carrying on a relentless exposure of the capitalist farmer, showing how his interests and his programs lead to the further ruin of the small and middle elements. Thus we will draw the poorest and most exploited sections into the movement.

In the South the Sharecroppers Union, approaching the question in this manner, has been marching ahead, carrying on struggles (the cotton pickers' strike, for example) and preparing for bigger struggles in the winter and spring. Its membership is now around 8,000.

Naturally, the sharecroppers have very serious problems still unsolved, such as the development of greater unity between the Ne-

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groes and whites, better consolidation of their movement, the struggle against the Bankhead tax and the A.A.A. program; but it is a real bulwark for the most oppressed farmers all over the South. Recently a significant move for unity took place between the Sharecroppers Union, composed mainly of Negroes, and the Southern Tenant-Farmers' Union, containing a majority of white farmers.

Our program for the country generally is a correct one, raising the correct demands for the most exploited. By struggle around such demands the class differences will become clearer; the farmers will find out whether their interests are with the exploited masses, or on the side of the capitalist farmers. However, we do find tendencies to neglect the more fundamental issues of relief, debts, evictions, foreclosures, rents and taxes, or to raise issues in a way which may tend to confuse the toiling farmers and even draw them closer to the reformist and capitalist elements. For instance, when the price issue, in which the farmers are all interested, is raised, we must show how this demand can work for the benefit of the small farmers, and also explain how it may be used in maneuvers against them. This demand, used as a general propaganda slogan, tends to connect up, in the mind of the small farmer, his interests with those of the big farmer; to a certain extent, even to the New Deal, by making him more receptive to its demagogy. Lenin states:

> "The small farmers as a class cannot possibly fail to tend to seek a rise in the prices of agricultural products, but this is equivalent to their participation jointly with the big landowners in the division of the land rent, which makes for their solidarity with the landowners against the rest of society." ("Capitalism and Agriculture in the U.S.")

Capitalist interests, insofar as they have anything to do with price fixing, will use it against the small farmers and workers. Thus, used in a general fashion, the price demand becomes reformist and works to the detriment of the movement. Witness how the reformists and the New Dealers have been using this price issue to lead the farmers away from mass action.

Can the price demand be used? Certainly, but as a concrete demand of struggle against the monopolies, for higher prices for the farmers and lower prices to the workers; a struggle based upon wide masses of workers and farmers and involving mass actions of an intensive character. In connection with such a fight, struggles are also to be developed around more fundamental issues, on to a higher level. In this concrete way the demand for higher prices can be a very important one. For instance, past experience shows that among the milk farmers especially, the price fight can quickly

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take on a broad militant mass character. In discussing the question of higher prices with the farmers we must carefully explain these effective methods of struggling for them, and how the farmer can easily be misled to his own disadvantage by seeking government regulation of prices and the like.

In some instances the idea of higher prices has been carried over by even militant elements to a tolerance and even, in a few instances, to the acceptance of the cost of production demand which has been raised so demagogically by the Holiday and Farmers Union Leaders. For instance, an article by a militant leader in the *Farmers' Weekly* of December 14, uses such expressions as "a splendid slogan", "worth fighting for", and the cost of production "challenges the capitalist system for profit" to describe this demand. Such an analysis certainly does not clarify our forces in the countryside as to the true significance of this slogan. The analysis which the editors promised in a footnote to this article should help to clarify the farmers.

This demand, by its vagueness, leads to inactivity. It is a slogan to quiet mass action and put the toiling farmers at the tail-end of the reformist movement. Of course, we sympathize with and support the struggle of the small farmer against exploitation through low prices paid by marketing monopolies, while not forgetting to show him the more fundamental exploitation through debts, rents, interest, and taxes. But the cost of production slogan does not help solve these problems. Every farmer's cost of production varies. Few know exactly what their cost of production is. Taken seriously, this demand would lead to governmental investigation, delays, and inaction. Only when a definite demand for a certain price is set by agreement amongst the farmers, a price which may or may not be cost of production, have we a demand with any definiteness. But then it is no longer a cost of production demand, but a demand for a definite price. But this price demand, too, will lead to confusion unless it takes the form of mass struggle as indicated earlier.

Now, due to objective conditions and to our work, which, although weak, is beginning to show results, the farmers' movement is rising. Our task is to overcome as rapidly as possible, especially in certain key sectors, the weaknesses which have held us back. We have just discussed the improvement of the Party and of our base among the rural poor. Some additional points follow.

DROUGHT RELIEF

The problem of relief for the farmers of the drought regions is continuously becoming more serious. From the very outset, the leadership of the militant farmers' movement trailed along behind

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on this issue. The campaign in the *Daily Worker* was slow. The United Farmers' League manifesto and drought relief program were belated and lacked an energetic organizational drive. The *Farmers' Weekly* gave very little actual leadership in this campaign. Certainly this was the clearest issue for unity among the oppressed drought-stricken farmers; yet the Farmers' National Committee for Action has only during the more recent period actively come forward as a leader in this fight. Now it is becoming a more significant factor by organizing local committees of action to lead the struggles in the drought area.

Demands for local and wider mass actions and for a general mass Drought Relief Conference are developing in the Northwest States, among the farmers' organizations, united front committees of action, militant leaders, and also among the rural workers. This struggle involves the future of these farmers, the possibilities of getting feed and seed to continue production, and supplies to keep the family alive. It is a drive against the whole A.A.A. program of destruction, rehabilitation homesteads, and its steps toward compulsion, fascism, and war. It will gather support for the Farmers' Emergency Relief Bill and will certainly give great impetus to the fight to wipe out the big debts of the farmers and the struggles around rents, taxes, foreclosures, and evictions. This drought relief movement can shake the country in the interest of the exploited rural population as well as the city workers.

THE A.A.A. AND REFORMIST PROGRAMS

The analysis and exposure of the A.A.A. have not been given to the farmers by the *Farmers' Weekly* from week to week with the consistency and insight that would enable the average farmer to understand clearly what the real purpose, the class character and aims of the New Deal-A.A.A. are, inspiring him with confidence in the paper's leadership, arousing and showing him how to fight the A.A.A. effectively. A militant farmer reading the paper would not feel able to explain satisfactorily to his neighbor the latest developments and maneuvers of the A.A.A. and other events in the agricultural field, not to speak of adequately developing the struggle around them. Although much of this was due to lack of explanation, sometimes erroneous analyses were made.

For instance, the issue of August 17, following too quickly the lead of some capitalist press stories, declared that the drought was leading to the abandonment of the A.A.A. reduction, whereas the opposite was the case. The exposure generally of the A.A.A. has had weaknesses similar to those which characterize the *Weekly*.

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Or, take the explanation of the programs of the Farmer-Labor leaders and the "Progressive" Party movements which have taken on serious proportions. We have not yet placed before the farmers the necessary careful analysis of their role, or the differences between them and a genuine Labor Party which fights in the interests of the workers and exploited farmers.

We have not, nor has the *Farmers' Weekly*, systematically taken the various farm programs, analyzed them, compared them with the program of the militant farmers' movement, and shown the farmers which program is in their interests.

The press, especially the *Farmers' Weekly* and the *Daily Worker* are main instruments in leading the exposure of the A.A.A. and the programs of the Farmer-Labor, reformist and old-line leaders. The *Weekly* has the responsibility of becoming a real mass leader, of overcoming its weaknesses by consistent analysis and timely articles as well as news stories on all these vital problems. The Party has not helped and supported this militant paper as it should, a situation which must be changed. The *Daily Worker* can also become much more decisive by more persistent guidance and leadership. It is also necessary for us and the press to develop more clearly the methods by which the farmers can struggle against the various phases and aspects of the A.A.A. as it affects them in their daily life. With the re-orientation and realignment going on we must be prepared to answer the questions arising in the minds of the farmers on how to meet these problems. The fight against the subsistence farming program in its various aspects is becoming much more acute as the A.A.A. proceeds.

The vote for compulsory control of cotton and tobacco reduction, which was carried through by all kinds of trickery and force, now raises much more sharply the fight against these fascist methods in the South and the future extension of compulsory control to other crops and sections of the country.

WORK AMONG THE REFORMIST AND OLD-LINE ORGANIZATIONS AND UNITED ACTION

The work among the rank and file of the reformist and old-line organizations is very important. It will not be developed unless we take up the particular problems and grievances of the members of each organization, the special features of their programs, the particular maneuvers of the reactionary and reformist leaders in fooling their members. At the same time, these farmers have many demands and grievances common to other exploited farmers, both organized and unorganized, around which united action can be developed.

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In several States in the Northwest there is a possibility of turning the local Holiday movement onto the path of militant struggle. Pine Co., Minn., is a good example of what can be done. Patient work with the Holiday farmers in their organization, explaining their problems, bringing forward the demands and needs of the rank-and-file members, showing the necessity for and *how* to struggle to win relief and better conditions were factors in bringing about this unity in mass struggle.

Besides local united action, the basis for unity on a much larger scale than we have yet established exists in such issues as relief, which was discussed earlier. Politically, a wide united support can be gathered in the countryside around the struggle against war and fascism. This will have power in proportion as we can develop the united day-to-day struggles for immediate needs. The U.F.L. has recently become more active in developing united action in certain localities; but it still has many sectarian characteristics which hold it back. In such united front actions the United Farmers' League and other militant farmers' organizations which are a main support for them, will be built. Organizationally we need to become more flexible, adapting ourselves to the objective situation.

The *Farmers' Weekly* in the last months has been taking more initiative in promoting the united front movement; but it can become a much more powerful organizer and leader in this work.

Unity is a paramount issue, unity, not only among the ruined farmers, but also between the toiling rural masses and the workers, unity against the destruction and starvation programs of finance capital and its policy—the New Deal.

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Aspects of the Depression of the Special Type in the U.S.A.

By LABOR RESEARCH ASSOCIATION

TO WHAT EXTENT AND IN WHAT FORMS WAS THE TRANSITION TO THE DEPRESSION (FROM THE LOWEST POINT OF ECONOMIC CRISIS) ACCOMPLISHED AT THE EXPENSE OF THE WORKERS?

> "Capitalism has succeeded in somewhat easing the position of industry *at the expense of the workers*—increasing their exploitation by increasing the intensity of their labor; *at the expense of the farmers*—by pursuing a policy of paying the lowest prices for the product of their labor, for foodstuffs and partly for raw materials; *at the expense of the peasants in the colonies and in the economically weak countries*—by still further forcing down the prices of the products of their labor, principally of raw materials, and also of foodstuffs." (Stalin, *Report to the Seventeenth Congress of the C.P.S.U.*, International Publishers, p. 14.)

THE statement quoted above is true in the United States as in other capitalist countries. The position of industry has been somewhat relieved *at the expense of the workers*, whose standard of living has been further lowered in the year and a half since the lowest point of the economic crisis. This fact becomes clear when we consider, (1) the continued mass unemployment and the speeding up of those workers who have jobs; (2) the increased profits of corporations and increased income for the rich, as compared with the actual reduction of workers' real wages. Greater numbers of workers on relief; cuts in the meager amounts doled out in relief; postponement of any system of unemployment and social insurance—all these facts mean that the great masses of the working class are more than ever at the mercy of capitalist exploitation. This worsening of conditions for the workers has been accompanied by increased violence against all who dared to strike or demonstrate for higher wages, increased relief, or for any other demands.

Extent of Rise. In the 20 months from March, 1933, the lowest point of the economic crisis when Roosevelt took office, to the end of 1934, business activity as registered by the *Annalist* index has increased by 12 points—17 per cent—from 58.5 to 70.6 (October, 1934).

A rapid, speculative rise occurred during the first few months of the Roosevelt New Deal. By July, 1933, business activity was at

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89.5, the high point of the New Deal period, not again reached in the following 20 months. From that high point it fell again to 73.1 by the beginning of 1934 (January) and rose only to 80.2 in May, the high point of the year 1934.

Between May and September, 1934, decline in business activity —following the artificially stimulated production of the previous year—was greater than for the corresponding period of any year back to 1929. The index dropped to 66.4 in September, a fall of over 17 per cent in four months and by November, 1934, stood only at 70.9.

Much of the 12-point increase in production during the past year and a half has merely added to the accumulation of unsold stocks of goods. Because of the low purchasing power of the masses, these goods have not been consumed. At the end of 1934 the index (October, 1934) for stocks of both raw materials and manufactured goods on hand showed little change from the corresponding figure for October, 1933, when stocks of goods had already accumulated from the N.R.A. speculative increase in production. In other words, at the beginning of the sixth winter of the great depression, warehouses in many industries were choked with unsold goods.

Unemployment at the lowest point of the economic crisis involved nearly half the working class, and in the transition to depression we see no great improvement. In fact, the past year, from October, 1933, to October, 1934, has seen an actual growth in numbers unemployed.

According to conservative estimates of the American Federation of Labor (for criticism of the inadequacy of this estimate see *Labor Fact Book II*, page 74), 550,000 more persons were out of work in October, 1934, than in October, 1933. Unemployment has thus increased by more than half a million in this year of "recovery", from 10,122,000 a year ago to 10,671,000 in October this year.

Even this conservative estimate indicates that about one quarter of those "normally employed" are still out of work. More accurate and comprehensive estimates by the Pen and Hammer organization and the Labor Research Association indicate that at least 15,000,000 persons, or over 30 per cent of the working population, are now jobless.

While millions are still entirely without work, other millions have only part-time jobs. No exact figures on the extent of partial employment are available but it is estimated that at least a quarter of those counted as "employed" have only part-time work. This system of giving out one, two or three days' work a week is one of the chief methods used to reduce the amount of relief given to the unemployed, for those who have any work at all are usually barred from relief rolls.

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Speed-up, involving rationalization and the intensification of labor, is leaving outside of industry millions of workers who before the crisis were needed in production. Increased speeding up of workers has been a marked feature of the National Recovery Administration. In almost every industry the N.R.A. code has meant at least as much production in fewer hours than were required before the New Deal. (See *Labor Fact Book II,* pp. 74-76.)

Productivity, or the output per worker, has increased markedly during the "recovery" period. According to a recent authoritative estimate, output per man-hour in manufacturing plants in 1932 appears to have been 20 per cent greater than in 1927 and 12 per cent greater than in 1929.

According to another estimate by Stuart Chase, "71 men, working by June, 1933, technical methods, could produce as much as 100 men did in 1923-25 and do it on a shorter work week". On this basis, nearly three out of every ten men would no longer be needed in industry even if production rose to the same level as before the crisis. These unwanted workers are becoming "surplus" workers under capitalism and are doomed to all the horrors of many years of permanent unemployment, poverty and destitution.

Increases in productivity have been accomplished during the crisis and the depression with a minimum of new technical improvements. The maximum amount of labor has been squeezed from the workers without any considerable increase in the number of new appliances in use, and with a reduction in the number of working hours per week. Average working hours in manufacturing fell from 36.6 per week in March, 1933, to 33.3 in September, 1934. As pointed out by Sinani in *The Communist International* (No. 20, October 20, 1934), such "reduction in hours thus becomes an indication not of an improvement, but of a worsening of the position of the workers (either intensification or partial unemployment or both)".

Relief Needs Increase. With increasing numbers unemployed, the number of those seeking relief has very greatly increased. A million *families* were added to relief lists in the year ending October, 1934, when the total number stood at 4,161,006, as compared with 3,010,516 last year. The total number of *persons* on relief is now approximately 18,000,000 (*New York Times,* Dec. 14, 1934).

Numbers on relief are expected to total 5,000,000 families, or over 22,000,000 persons, by February, 1935.

In the face of these mounting needs, amounts given in relief have been sharply cut in most centers. Federal Administrator Hopkins, on November 22, 1934, announced that even the low minimum of 30 cents an hour on work relief projects was abandoned. Single men are being removed from the lists and sent to camps where the

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cash payment is so small that the work practically amounts to forced labor, almost unpaid. In New York State, for example, many single men have already been taken off the relief rolls and sent out to Graycourt, near Tuxedo, a former women's prison farm. Here they work for their keep, receiving only $2.50 a week in cash wages. Similar schemes are being put into effect in other centers.

Support of the unemployed falls increasingly upon the workers themselves, on those members of the working class family who have any work at all, even on a part-time basis. In this way the rich have evaded taxation for relief and have placed the main burden of "recovery" on the shoulders of the workers.

INCREASED PROFITS OF CORPORATIONS AND INCREASED INCOME FOR THE RICH; LESS FOR THE WORKERS

That the New Deal has increased the income of the rich at the expense of the workers and lower middle class groups is clearly shown by the figures on federal income taxes in 1933, recently made public by the Bureau of Internal Revenue. *While the number of million-dollar incomes more than doubled in the year between* 1932 *and* 1933, *incomes of less than* $5,000 *were sharply cut.*

Corporations reporting net income in 1933 showed a gain of 35 per cent in their earnings for the year. Individuals with net income of $25,000 or more enjoyed an increase of almost 10 per cent in total income reported. On the other hand, those receiving less than $25,000 a year suffered a decline of about 4 per cent in total income reported during that "recovery" year.

The largest decrease in income was suffered by the lowest income group, those earning less than $5,000, whose total income dropped by $320,000,000. The number of returns in this group was more than 2 per cent lower than in 1932, since fewer had that much income to report and the aggregate net income shown was down well over 4 per cent.

In the very high income brackets, on the other hand, there were spectacular increases for individuals in 1933. Where in 1932 there were 20 persons who reported incomes of over a million, in 1933 there were 46 reporting such incomes. *One of these drew more than* $5,000,000 (probably John D. Rockefeller, Jr.), *corresponding to the total relief income of about* 20,000 *unemployed families, or some* 80,000 *persons.*

The little group at the top of 46-million income persons got $81,558,981 in 1933 as compared with $35,239,556 that went to the million-dollar group in 1932. Thus while the number of these richest individuals doubled in the year, the amount they took increased by more than 130 per cent.

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Sharp increases were shown for 1933 in profits from sales of real estate, stocks and bonds.

But during the same period, total wages and salaries on which income taxes were paid *decreased* by about $567,600,000 from $7,764,393,347 in 1932 to $7,198,828,256 in 1933—a drop of almost 8 per cent.

Large numbers of salaried and professional persons, as well as small business men, failed to enjoy any increase in income in 1933 as compared with 1932. Commenting editorially on these facts, the *Journal of Commerce* (December 11, 1934) admits that the situation was even worse for the lower income groups than the figures would indicate, because of the increased cost of living:

> "In fact, their position changed for the worse last year even more than the income tax returns would indicate, for they faced a period of rising living costs and taxation with smaller incomes."

Back of these figures on the larger incomes for the rich and the smaller incomes for the poorer groups are the facts on increased profits of corporations, representing increased exploitation of the workers. Profits have increased greatly in 1934 as compared with 1933. For 392 firms, as reported by Standard Statistics Co., net profits after all deductions aggregated $335,870,000 during the first six months of 1934, an increase of 609 per cent over the corresponding period of last year. For 166 of the larger industrial firms, net income aggregated $175,000,000 in the first three quarters of 1933 and $300,000,000 in the first three quarters of 1934. (For further information on profits, see Labor Research Association, *Economic Notes*, August, September, November, 1934.)

RISE IN LIVING COSTS

The New Deal, by direct and indirect price-control, has increased prices in order to increase profits for the capitalists. While wages were fixed at depression levels by the minimum wage provisions of the codes, or lowered even below these minimums by various schemes in the codes and by code violations, the prices of things workers must buy have been greatly increased. This forcing up of living costs is one of the chief forms by which the so-called "recovery" has been accomplished at the expense of the workers.

Retail food prices were 28 per cent higher and retail clothing prices about 27 per cent higher at the end of November, 1934, than in March, 1933. The cost of eating, chief item in the worker's budget, has thus increased until in terms of food, his dollar was worth only 85 cents in September, 1933, and at the end of October, 1934, only 78 cents. His dollar would buy 81 cents worth of

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clothing and furnishings in September, 1933, but only 79½ cents worth in September, 1934.

General living costs rose more than 5 per cent in the first six months of the New Deal. Between March, 1933, and November, 1934, general living costs went up by 12.5 per cent, according to the National Industrial Conference Board.

Prices will be forced up still further during the coming months, according to statements by President Roosevelt and Secretary of Agriculture Wallace. In August, 1934, Secretary Wallace declared that general living costs would be up 6 or 7 per cent more during the coming winter, and one of his assistants admitted at the same time that, taken separately, food prices were expected to rise from 15 to 20 per cent as a result of the drought (*New York Times*, August 15, 1934). Bread and certain other essential articles of food in certain cities have already risen from 20 to 50 per cent in the past six months.

President Roosevelt, on October 31, 1934, repeated his intention to lift prices in the following months and thus to force down still further the living standards of the workers:

> "As President Roosevelt revealed his determination today to lift prices in the next eight months, he said that at the same time there would be an increase in values. . . . The move represents a continuation of the long pull toward levels at which the President would be willing to stabilize. . . . Much of the development of the administration's monetary policy has been, and is, dependent upon the progress toward bringing prices into line." (*New York Times*, November 1, 1934.)

By "bringing prices into line" is meant the drive to force up prices of food products which the great mass of workers must buy. Wages, meanwhile, lag behind the rising cost of living, and thus the main burden of recovery is laid upon the workers and other low-income groups.

REAL WAGES FALL

The transition to a depression has not put a stop to the fall of workers' *real wages*. While a certain increase has taken place in nominal wages—and especially in *wage rates*—due to the struggles and threat of strikes on the part of the workers themselves, this increase does not keep pace with the rise in living costs.

The new lowered standard of living is shown clearly in the fact that the individual worker's buying power has *declined* in the period of the New Deal. In terms of bread, meat, light, fuel and clothing, the necessaries of life, the average worker cannot buy even

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so much as he could buy in March, 1933, at the lowest level of the economic crisis. This fact is openly stated by the American Federation of Labor in its *Monthly Survey of Business* for November, 1934, on the basis of U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics reports:

> "Thus far, however, the rapid increase in prices has cancelled all gains in the average worker's income. . . . *Workers' average weekly income in* 104 *industries* (including 90 manufacturing industries, mining and other groups) *employing nearly two-thirds of all industrial workers was* $19.65 *in March,* 1933; $19.05 *in September,* 1914, *when the rise in living costs is accounted for.*" (Our emphasis.)

From these figures we see that *real wages,* representing the worker's buying power, have actually fallen by a little over 3 per cent since the low point of March, 1933. While capitalists' profits have increased, workers' real wages have *decreased.* The Roosevelt New Deal has enriched the owners at the direct expense of the workers.

While the N.R.A. codes established a minimum wage of $12 or $13 a week, below which rates were not supposed to fall, many exceptions, exemptions and violations have reduced actual wages below the minimum set. No code contained any guarantee whatsoever of any minimum *earnings* either weekly or yearly. Earnings are frequently far below even the low $12 level. In Pennsylvania, for example, in the early spring of 1934, it was found that one-half of the women workers in the cotton garment industry were earning less than $10.95 a week, and 15 per cent of the women earned less than $5. Barely a third of the women workers had received as much as $13 a week, the minimum wage fixed by the code, although the code had been in effect for four months.

Since the code minimum has tended to become the maximum, many skilled workers have seen their wages cut by the N.R.A. and their standards of living further lowered. The present drive to lower the wages of building trades workers in connection with a federal housing scheme is an indication of what skilled workers may expect in the further extension of the recovery program.

TERROR INCREASES

But when workers under the New Deal have struck for higher wages, or for any other demands, employers have had at their disposal the entire apparatus of State violence to use in breaking the strike. In no other period of American labor history has there been such a record of terror against the workers as during the first nine months of 1934.

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Between January 1 and September 22, 1934, 46 *workers*—10 of them Negroes—*were killed in strikes or struggles.* In the general textile strike alone, during September, 1934, 13 workers were murdered in four states; nine workers were killed in the general marine strike; and eight workers in miners' strikes, mostly in Alabama.

National Guardsmen were called out to suppress 22 workers' struggles in 19 states between July, 1933, and mid-September, 1934. They were responsible for killing at least nine of the strikers. Police, deputy sheriffs and gun thugs, hired by employers, murdered the other workers.

This increasing terror is the outward sign of a developing fascism in the United States. The menace of fascism is increasing, as the capitalists resort to methods of barbarism to maintain their rule. Only the united front of the entire working class can halt the growth of fascism in this richest of capitalist countries.

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